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EDITORIAL

BENNETT'S REPORT CARD

Education Secretary William Bennett has been tasting the wine again. He judges the vintage described in his new report, "American Education: Making It Work," superior to that of the disastrous year 1983, when a blue-ribbon commission declared our schools so bad as to constitute a national crisis. The stuff Bennett is savoring now is the fruit of his labor in the educational vineyards since then, and he would have us believe that the product (curriculum, test scores, numbers of graduates) is somehow better.

If so, it's not better by much, as even he admits, and a look at Bennett's five years of viniculture will tell you why. From the beginning of his tenure, the secretary has put a small mind to work on a serious problem. He does not know his history or he would realize that at no time in our past have Americans in any numbers been well educated. Any healthy inquiry into improving education must start by asking why this has always been so. Bennett exhorts, he rants, he abuses, but he has yet to offer one idea that American education can take with it into the future.

So what, then, are the Bennett ingredients for improved schools? They are these and they are tired: more discipline, tougher standards, more tests, more homework, a more standardized curriculum—and a cadre of charismatic teachers who can turn all this water into wine. But what about the sort of education that doesn't show up on a multiple-choice test? What about the qualities most Americans (and most employers) say they want in an educated person: the capacity to make judgments, the ability to learn independently, the wits to detect problems? In short, the use of the mind? The schools Bennett likes don't teach those things. They can't if they follow his instructions. All they can hope for each spring is that the standardized testing system will show they've lucked out with a good year.

LA PESTE
Daniel Singer

ON 'CIVIL SOCIETY'
Jefferson Morley

POLLS OR PROPAGANDA?
William Bollinger
Daniel M. Lund

RIGHTIST ON THE RIGHTS COMMISSION
Barry Mehler

NOAM CHOMSKY THEN AND NOW
Brian Morton

NICARAGUAN TURNING POINT

HOW THE 1984 VOTE WAS SABOTAGED

ROY GUTMAN

Nicaragua's elections of November 4, 1984, were a turning point not only in the post-Somoza history of Nicaragua but also in U.S. policy. Of the many missed opportunities to achieve at least some of the stated U.S. goals in Nicaragua, perhaps none compared with this. Policy divisions in Washington all but assured an inconclusive contest.

"One of the biggest mistakes of all, maybe the biggest mistake, was the handling of the election," said a high-level U.S. diplomatic source. "The idea of the C.I.A. and White House staff was to avoid participation in the elections. The debate was over whether to go halfway or not." The State Department's planning for the elections, meanwhile, had gone into high gear following Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega's announcement on February 21, 1984, of the voting date.

In late March of that year, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State L. Craig Johnstone met Arturo Cruz Sr., the former Nicaraguan Ambassador to Washington, to discuss the elections. Over lunch at Germaine's, a Vietnamese restaurant in upper Georgetown, Johnstone asked Cruz if he would be interested in running for the presidency. "We had to be sure there would be a candidate," Johnstone said. "He was the one leader we thought they might be able to allow into an electoral process."

However, while the State Department supported Cruz's candidacy in hopes it would foster a deal in which the *contras* would "go away," members of the hard right—William Casey and Jeane Kirkpatrick at the Cabinet level, Oliver North and Constantine Menges on the National

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LETTERS.

'WALL STREET,' TAKE TWO

Los Angeles

Although it is clear that James Lardner does not care for my film *Wall Street* ["Films," Jan. 23], I think his review is unfair on two points:

§ He reviews the interview of me in *The New York Times* and the press kit rather than the movie. I do not write those things. They are done in a specific showoff style to make for easy newspaper copy. The fact that I went from Vietnam to Wall Street in subject matter was not because it made for headlines but because, as I attested to in several interviews, I was genuinely interested in Wall Street, as my father had been involved there since 1931.

§ My "opportunism" does not extend, either, to Lardner's charge that I started up this movie in 1987 to capitalize on the stock market's topicality. I had been developing it since the early 1980s, based on people I knew on Wall Street, and the first draft was completed (pre-Ivan Boesky) in June 1986.

As a longtime reader of *The Nation*, I am continually disappointed by reviews attacking movies like *Cry Freedom* and *Salvador*, which attempt, if not always successfully, to shed some degree of enlightenment on issues that are avoided like the plague in commercial filmmaking. Your hatred of anything perceived as coming from evil Hollywood is a simplistic and destructive American liberal tradition that needs some fresh looking at.

Oliver Stone

RANDOLPH, JEANE AND JEFF

Philadelphia

One of the Reagan Administration's greatest propaganda triumphs has been the establishment of a consensus in the mass media and respectable opinion that U.S. policy is aimed at converting the Sandinistas to more democratic ways. A compelling case can be made, however, that it is the very *democratic* features of the Nicaraguan revolution—"The Threat of a Good Example," in the words of an Oxfam monograph—that helped generate U.S. hostility. This easily explains the seeming paradox of carrying out a policy of terrorism, bound to increase repression—and never used to impel reform in South Africa, Chile et al.—while claiming a design to pressure Nicaragua toward increasing democratic freedoms.

Jefferson Morley ["Randolph, Jeane and the *Contras*," Feb. 27] accepts the propaganda frame, and premises benevolent U.S. intentions, without really addressing the issue. If he had used a modern radical like Noam Chomsky as his counterpoint to Jeane Kirkpatrick, this issue could not have been evaded: Chomsky has a chapter on the threat of a good example in his book *The Culture of Terrorism*, and spells out the nature of the profoundly undemocratic "Central American mode" that the United States enforces in its imperial backyard. By using Randolph Bourne, Morley creates a more antiseptic construct, in which the imperial ideal as espoused by Kirkpatrick is based on our concern over democracy and freedom, in contrast with Bourne's belief that the quest for freedom should be refocused on developments at home. These are thus only conflicting versions of American idealism.

Nowhere in Morley's article does he hint that in relation to Nicaragua (among many other places), Kirkpatrick's imperial vision rests on monumental hypocrisy on the issue of democracy, lies and exploitation. He operates within the Reaganite consensus on the nature of Nicaraguan society and U.S. purposes there. That this reflects Morley's own beliefs is indicated by the title of his *New York Times* book review of April 12, 1987, "Beyond the Reach of Our Good Intentions." But the good intentions he attributes to the United States (and Kirkpatrick) are a patriotic myth, refuted by a mass of readily available evidence, and distressing to find in *The Nation*.

Edward S. Herman

MORLEY REPLIES

Washington

Edward S. Herman skips the usual pleasantries of quoting, paraphrasing or summarizing my argument and proceeds to my error: I failed to write the article that Herman would have written. What I actually say about Bourne, Kirkpatrick and the American empire matters less to Herman than what I did not say. I did not quote Noam Chomsky with sufficient diligence, nor did I reiterate the conventional leftist view of Jeane Kirkpatrick's bad intentions. Herman does not discuss my argument that criminally destructive and misguided policies can be—and usually are—undertaken with very, very good intentions. He tells us that such unorthodox views are "distressing" to him. Herman concludes by insisting that the best antidote to the conformist Reaganite consensus is more militant conformity in the pages of *The Nation*, a proposition that is both spiritually contradictory and politically self-defeating.

Jefferson Morley

'SEMPER FI' IN MOSCOW

Washington

I have no problem with author Michael Rogin's central point in "Sex, Secrets and American Virtue" in *The Nation*'s March 5 issue. The so-called marine spy scandal almost certainly never occurred.

The problem I have with Rogin's article is the way he sets up his case by citing stories in *Time*, *Newsweek* and *U.S. News & World Report* to show, presumably, how gullible the news magazines were. Rogin's implied criticism is based solely on hindsight. If he wants to criticize the early coverage with the benefit of later information, fine; but he might at least have done all his homework. To hear him tell it, serious questions were not raised about the matter until Don Oberdorfer's story ran in *The Washington Post* last January. That is untrue.

In fact, I wrote—and *Time* published—a similar article a full six months before Oberdorfer's. Let me quote a few sentences from that July 20, 1987, article:

> [T]here is growing concern that the military may have either blown the investigation or blown it out of proportion or both. Says a ranking U.S. diplomat familiar with the case: "The charge that KGB agents were being led around the embassy has never been proved. There's never been any evidence that the embassy has been compromised in any way. . . . [Was the alleged espionage pattern] provided by aggressive, overzealous agents of the Naval Investigative Service? According to military attorneys for Lonetree and Bracy, the classified report of the formal investigation reveals that Lonetree's INS interrogators urged him to "lie to us, Clayton," hoping that he would implicate others. . . . According to his Marine lawyer, Bracy's interrogation and his eventual confession were shams. . . . Bracy was ordered to sign an inaccurate summary of his statements without being allowed to read it. But when one of his interrogators jumped up and shouted, "We've got ourselves another spy!" Bracy immediately denied saying anything of the kind. . . . The spy case cast a pall over the Shultz mission [to Moscow]; some State Department officials say that was one reason the charges were so well publicized, even hyped.

Unlike the Oberdorfer piece (which I admire, by the way), *Time*'s story ran well before U.S. officials began backing away from their earlier, extravagant statements.

Journalists make mistakes. So do scholars. Mistakes were certainly made in the early coverage of the marine case, not because of gullibility but because, at the time, there was simply no reason—other than the constitutional presumption of innocence, where the defendants were concerned—to conclude that a serious breach of security had not occurred. The question is, Having taken the wrong tack initially, do journalists continue pursuing the story to get the truth? In this case, the answer is yes. *The New York Times* did. *The Washington Post* did. So did others—including *Time*, which was, I believe, the first major publication in the United States to raise comprehensive questions about the government's entire case.

Rogin's description of *Time*'s coverage of this story is a straw man—all the more regrettable because it shifts attention away from the real issue: Who in the government was ultimately responsible for so grossly misleading the press and the public in the early stages of this story?

Stanley W. Cloud

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EDITORIALS.

Political Stealth

Recently the U.S. Air Force unveiled a drawing of its new, top-secret Stealth bomber, now officially known as the B-2. As expected, the plane looks like a flying wing. Because of its shape and construction, out of exotic nonferrous materials, the bomber is supposed to have the "stealthy" ability to penetrate the heartland of the Soviet Union without being detected by radar.

The brief Air Force press release, billed as a progress report on a miraculous addition to the U.S. strategic deterrent, announced that the bomber is scheduled for its first flight this fall. Air Force Secretary Edward (Pete) Aldridge Jr. noted that the plane "has enjoyed bipartisan congressional support from its inception" and claimed that it "will represent a dramatic leap forward in technology and the achievement of a major milestone in our nation's strategic modernization program." The 132-plane B-2s are supposed to start coming on line in the early 1990s, joining the B-1 in the nation's nuclear bomber force.

The press release was misleading in a number of respects. It did not mention that the first flight of the bomber has

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already been delayed by a year, for example. It did, however, contain a modicum of disturbing new information: This new bomber is going to cost a lot more than the earlier estimate of an astronomical $36.6 billion (in 1981 dollars). The Air Force said it is "re-evaluating cost estimates for the program as a result of current and projected fiscal constraints."

Most unsettling, the Air Force has not answered any of the critical questions by which Congress and the nation should determine whether the B-2 really will contribute to national defense or will instead represent just one more exorbitant procurement boondoggle, fueling the arms race without adding anything of value to our security. Aside from the more fundamental concern about the possible impact of this weapon on the prospects for nuclear arms reduction, those questions are: Is the bomber really needed? Will it perform well enough to accomplish its mission? How much are these planes going to cost? When are they to be battle-ready?

We don't know the answers to any of these queries, but if the tortuous development and production of the B-1 is any guide, all sorts of buzzers should be going off, warning of another potential national defense disaster. As Nick Kotz points out in his new book, ***Wild Blue Yonder: Money, Politics and the B-1 Bomber***, the concept of the B-1 survived for thirty years despite the disapproval of four Presidents, not because it was a good weapon but because its proponents in the military-industrial complex persevered and refused to accept defeat. At a cost of more than $28 billion, the Air Force has now produced 100 of these planes—one of which was knocked out of the sky last October in a collision with a pelican. By the Air Force's own admission, a single B-1 stands on lonely symbolic alert, while several billion dollars are spent trying to fix malfunctions in the others, including problems in their critical defensive avionics equipment.

The evidence at hand strongly suggests that the Stealth bomber is starting out with all the problems that plagued the B-1. The plane is behind schedule. It is over cost. Northrop Corporation, the B-2's prime contractor, is losing money on the project and being criticized for poor management. Nevertheless, the Air Force is rushing into production, its budget known only to select members of Congress, without a single bit of flight testing to demonstrate that the plane will really work.

Few members of Congress are demanding answers to the substantive questions about this project before signing yet another blank check. An estimated $10 billion to $15 billion already has been spent on the Stealth over the past ten years, the precise figure completely hidden in the Defense Department's "black budget."

Where, one might ask, are the Democrats who opposed the B-1, who favor arms control and who decry waste in military spending? In ***Wild Blue Yonder***, Kotz offers one explanation for their puzzling silence: An axiom of defense politics is that a member of Congress never dares oppose a major weapons system without having in his or her pocket a politically protective "pro-defense" vote. In opposing the B-1 in the late 1970s and early 1980s, dozens of Democrats justified their actions by saying they were for the Stealth bomber, which then amounted to little more than some artists' sketches and wind-tunnel tests. Had they been more courageous, those legislators could have explained to their constituents that the United States and the Soviet Union already possessed adequate deterrents, enough to destroy each other many times over, without either nuclear bomber.

As it turns out, the Stealth has become the "Democratic bomber," and at this point Democrats seem afraid to demand that they and the public be given even the most elemental information with which to make an informed judgment about the plane. These Democrats include, most prominently, Representative Les Aspin of Wisconsin, chair of the House Armed Services Committee, who has made a few weak protests about lack of information on the B-2, and Senator Sam Nunn of Georgia, chair of the Senate Armed Services Committee.

Recently, Nunn led the Stealth cheering section, predicting that the bomber "will render obsolete billions of dollars of Soviet investment in their current air defense." Nunn thereby trotted out what has traditionally been the Air Force's argument of last resort for a new strategic bomber. Namely, that this plane may cost us tens of billions of dollars, but it's going to force the Russians to spend even more billions to defend against it.

If and when rationality appears in the defense debate, someone must ask whether this nation might be better off spending those tens of billions of dollars to meet society's many other unmet needs.

The Leiken Memo

Remember Robert Leiken? For a while there, he was something of a celebrity. Leiken made his first splash on the intellectual-political scene in October 1984, when ***The New Republic*** published his extensive diatribe, "Nicaragua's Untold Stories." To wavering Democrats, Leiken was the most credible of the anti-Sandinistas: a self-proclaimed man of the left who also enjoyed the prestige of an academic and beltway insider conferred by stints at Georgetown's Center for Strategic International Studies and the liberal Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. By 1986, Leiken was on everybody's Zeitgeist Checklist. ***Time*** devoted a two-page spread to him; President Reagan mentioned him in a speech pressing for ***contra*** aid.

But there was more to Leiken than met the eye. His work as lobbyist for Arturo Cruz, the Hamlet of the ***contra*** movement, is already a matter of record. Now we have a partially declassified memorandum, written on January 19, 1985, to then-national security adviser Robert McFarlane from Walter Raymond, a veteran C.I.A. propagandist in charge of "public diplomacy" for the N.S.C. Raymond presented McFarlane with three "tactics in sustaining our support for the Contras." The third, and longest, he called "The Bob Leiken approach." It reads:

> I had a long talk with Bob Leiken who, as you know, is a rock-ribbed liberal who works for the Carnegie Endowment. Two months ago Leiken wrote a major piece supporting our

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policies, and it was a significant breakthrough. He approached me on 15 January at a face-to-face dinner and suggested that he would like to help. He plans to take some soundings and will confirm his willingness to help about 1 February. If Leiken is prepared to help he will be particularly useful in lobbying the political liberals in this city. He believes we have a fairly good chance of winning the *contras'* fight on the Hill if we play our cards right. I think at some point it will be useful for you to talk directly to him. His proposed package includes several elements which I will tick off for you below:

* build a positive image of the F.D.N. [Nicaraguan Democratic Force]. To do this we should send down one or more key journalists to start developing major positive stories for the U.S. He thought [University of Southern Illinois professor] Richard Millett might be willing.

* [entire paragraph deleted]

* We must clean up the image of the F.D.N. by making some changes, particularly removing known violators of human rights. We cannot sit on a status quo situation with the F.D.N. It would not be a sign of weakness on the Hill but rather a sign of a constructive willingness to meet Congressional critics halfway by offering to them a more "attractive package." He specifically mentioned a man named Lagas(?). He said that a more active effort should be made to unify the *contras*, including the involvement of [Miskito Indian leader] Brooklyn Rivera. In summary, we need a cleaned-up package.

. . .

The search for a "cleaned-up package" continued for three more years, much as Leiken and Raymond recommended, with revamped *contra* directorates and brave words about democracy. In the end, though, peace seems to be breaking out in Nicaragua. And Bob Leiken? Deprived of his political audience, he's back in the gentler world of academia, at Harvard University's Center for International Affairs.

La Peste

Paris

François Mitterrand, everything suggests, will be re-elected as President next Sunday, but Jean-Marie Le Pen is the unquestioned winner of the first-round tally. The fact that one out of seven French people should vote for the xenophobic leader of the National Front shook public opinion well beyond French frontiers. France was supposed to fall into the prevailing pattern of consensus politics. Instead, it set another dangerous precedent. For the first time since the war in Europe, a neofascist candidate captured 14.4 percent of the vote in a democratic poll. When reason fails to provide solutions, unreason may enter the political stage, and all French parties are thus to blame for the resistable rise of Jean-Marie Le Pen.

The respectable right is paying the price for having unleashed a Frankenstein. Five years ago, in order to defeat the ruling left, it launched a cheap campaign on the subject of insecurity and immigration. It forgot that there are always people eager to stoop even lower. Le Pen was one, ready to produce absurd equations such as "2 million foreign workers equals 2 million unemployed" and argue demagogically that immigration is the root of all evil. He is now getting his reward as a real rival to the two right-wing leaders. Raymond Barre, with 16.5 percent of the vote, is barely ahead of him, as is Jacques Chirac, with 19.9 percent. Indeed, Chirac is the main victim. Under the General, Gaullism was able to absorb the authoritarian strand of the French right; neo-Gaullism no longer fulfills that function.

Yet the left is even more responsible for the present plight. For years, in opposition, it was supposed to provide answers to the crisis of the system. Then, within a year of taking power, it dropped its project and became an agent of capitalist "restructuring." True, Mitterrand recovered politically as the champion of moderation who would convert France to consensus politics. But he did so by destroying the image of the left as a radical alternative. Le Pen, therefore, could parade as the only genuine outsider, and did so. It is not surprising that he won many votes amid the jobless and workers fearing unemployment.

The far left is not innocent either. The Communists, no longer credible because of their volte-faces, have continued their slide. With 6.8 percent of the vote, André Lajoinie did not get half the percentage of his predecessor, Georges Marchais, in 1981. But Pierre Juquin, the outcast reformer, also made no impact. He obtained fewer votes—2.1 percent—than the two Trotskyist candidates combined. Antoine Waechter, the ecologist, who won 3.8 percent of the vote despite an unimpressive campaign, confirmed the permanence of a pocket of sympathy for the Greens. If you add to these figures the number of Communists shocked by their party's suicidal course, and the Socialists disturbed by their party's drift to the right, there is quite a potential here for a radical revival.

But time is running short. Le Pen described his success as an "earthquake." For an advance of 4 percent this may be an exaggeration. The spread of a disease seems a more appropriate metaphor. The plague now extends over all of France, even if some parts are particularly affected. In the southern regions around Nice, Marseilles, Toulon and Avignon, the National Front gets one-quarter of the votes cast; in the industrial north—some suburbs of Paris, Alsace and Lorraine—about a fifth. Paradoxically, this success of the extreme right almost insures the victory of Mitterrand. Starting from less than 20 percent of the electorate, Chirac is hardly expected to achieve an absolute majority, particularly since he has the impossible task of wooing at one and the same time the xenophobic backers of the National Front and some decent supporters of Raymond Barre, who believe that France must remain a tolerant society opposed to any form of racism.

With the prospect of a Socialist President, and only one person out of seven following France's admirer of apartheid and Gen. Augusto Pinochet, is the alarm not exaggerated? No. What has happened in France is a reminder of what can happen anywhere. It is also a warning that when the left fails to provide a radical and rational alternative, the danger in time of economic crisis is great. Seven years ago, the election of François Mitterrand was a moment of hope and illusion. Next Sunday it is likely to be a bitter victory. DANIEL SINGER

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On 'Civil Society'

As I strolled through a retrospective of contemporary Eastern European art showing at the Hirshhorn Museum in Washington, D.C., I got to thinking about Jesse Jackson. *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* was doing brisk business in Dupont Circle, and I had just read in *Newsweek* that "Eastern Europe's re-energized dissident movement speaks out for a 'civil society.'" Since I had just voted for Jackson, I wondered if this Prague Spring twenty-years-later stuff tells us anything about America's own re-energized dissident movement—i.e., the Jackson campaign, the nuclear freeze movement, leftist labor unions, environmental groups and others. What does civil society in Eastern Europe tell us about civil society in America?

On the face of it, little. The popular movements of the East and West arose out of different historical circumstances and face different foes. One movement challenges late industrial Communism, as directed by Leonid Brezhnev and Mikhail Gorbachev; the other challenges the post-industrial capitalism of Paul Volcker and Ronald Reagan. Social movements, though, are defined less by what they oppose than what they propose. And, increasingly, the diverse grass-roots oppositionists in the East and West are proposing the same things.

The most fundamental idea shared by popular movements East and West is the principle of "civil society." This idea, which goes back in one form or another to the nineteenth century, is not really an articulated political philosophy or detailed political platform. In its current usage the term conjures up visions of a union of organic and pluralistic communities ranging from churches to labor unions to young rock-and-roll fans. (In Czechoslovakia, they call themselves "Lennonists.") Society is united not by the authority of the party or vagaries of the market but by respect for human rights, cultural diversity, socially responsible commerce, religious tolerance and environmental prudence.

Sound vague? It is. Civil society doesn't offer political solutions so much as it offers an arena for reviving the old-fashioned idea of citizenship. In the West, what Robert Kuttner calls "citizenship values" are overwhelmed by the marketplace values of Reaganism and neoliberalism. In the East, civil society is suffocated by the statist values of the party. Václav Havel, a Czech playwright and leader of the human rights group Charter 77, says "a radical renewal of citizenship" is the prerequisite for humanizing "centralized regimes."

On the direst threats to civil society—the arms race and human rights abuses—the popular movements, East and West, are inching closer together. The ideology of the cold war has always assumed that opponents of U.S. nuclear modernization have nothing in common with those who criticize Soviet human rights abuses, and vice versa—"The enemy of my enemy is my friend." This seductive logic long prevented human rights activists in the East from finding common ground with the peace activists of the West. But starting in 1981, Charter 77 sought to establish solidarity with the antinuclear protesters of Western Europe. When the peace movement, led by British professor E.P. Thompson, responded favorably, a respectful and productive dialogue began to flourish.

This citizens' dialogue is finally reaching the grass roots of the U.S. peace movement. More and more activists in the United States are taking up the coda of Charter 77: "Peace and human rights are indivisible." Randall Forsberg, who invented the nuclear freeze campaign, and Jonathan Schell, who made it compelling for the American public in *The Fate of the Earth*, now emphasize that true nuclear peace depends on respect for human rights in Eastern Europe.

On other issues, such as environmentalism and antimilitarism, there has been less formal East-West dialogue but there is convergence nonetheless. Hungary has a flourishing environmental movement that fights acid rain and nuclear power and is aiming to block a huge dam project on the Danube that sounds like Communism's answer to the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway. In Poland, a new group called Freedom and Peace is campaigning for the right of young men to declare themselves conscientious objectors to military service. Like the anti-C.I.A. student movement, Freedom and Peace resists the state's rationale of "national security" for invading civil society.

All of this seems to be part of a deeper discontent that was first widely expressed by the counterculture of the 1960s. As Havel put it in a recent interview: "Soviet totalitarianism is an extreme manifestation—a strange, cruel and dangerous species—of a deep-seated problem which equally finds expression in advanced Western society." Havel suggested that "self-propelling mega-machines, juggernauts of impersonal power such as large-scale enterprises and faceless governments represent the greatest threat to our present-day world." The founders of Students for a Democratic Society didn't put it much differently in the Port Huron statement.

Civil society provides a language that people of different ideologies can use to debate why the world is losing its human dimension. In a 1981 essay on Solidarity, Adam Michnik, a Polish historian, asserted that the essence of Solidarity

> lay in the restoration of social ties, self-organization aimed at guaranteeing the defense of labor, civil, and national rights. For the first time in the history of communist rule in Poland "civil society" was being restored, and it was reaching a compromise with the state.

My colleague Alexander Cockburn suggested in these pages [see "What's the Matter Here?" March 26] that Jackson might spur a political renewal that could force a similar kind of compromise in post-Reagan America: "The Jackson campaign sets the tempo for a counterattack by civil society on a broad agenda: raising of the minimum wage, restoration of progressivity in the tax system, reassertion of public control."

Does this mean supporters of Solidarity and the Jackson campaign are political soul mates? Of course not. But the Solidarity activist and the Sandinista sympathizer might agree that the United States and the Soviet Union have no

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right to dominate their smaller neighbors through proxy wars conducted by means of military aid and mendacious propaganda. Jesse Jackson and Lech Walesa might be even more likely to agree about Michnik's conception of "labor, civil and national rights." The idea of civil society, in short, makes political dialogue possible where it might otherwise seem inappropriate or futile.

So, it's no surprise that I thought of Jesse Jackson in the midst of an Eastern European art exhibition. Both remind me why I feel like a wallflower at the ongoing celebration of 1968. It's not just that I was all of 10 years old then. I'm 29, got a boy of my own now, and I wonder, Why all the nostalgia about 1968, about Mayor Daley's cops rioting in Chicago and Brezhnev's tanks rolling in Prague? The counterculture of the 1960s is maturing into the civil society of the 1990s. Why not start celebrating that? JEFFERSON MORLEY

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CALVIN TRILLIN

In a recent *Newsday* story, there was a quote from Liz Smith, the gossip columnist of the New York *Daily News*, that I couldn't get out of my mind: "Remember, they don't have gossip in Russia."

This was said in the context of trying to get some perspective on a widely publicized feud between two other gossip columnists—in these grim times, Ms. Smith pointed out, being able to devote a lot of attention to something so frivolous could be seen as a luxury—but it had a different effect on me. It made me realize that there are almost 283 million Russians who don't know the first thing about Elizabeth Taylor.

Once I began thinking about those Russians, I envisioned them in every part of their daily routines. I could see them at the tractor factory, where they're under a lot of pressure because their previous efforts to meet high production quotas resulted in sending out tractors whose motors tended to fall out. I could see them at the market, buying cabbage and potatoes—or maybe, now that Gorbachev has begun to restructure the entire society, instant borscht. I could see them settling down after dinner in comfortable armchairs to read *Pravda* or watch the Soviet state television's weekly prime-time family drama based on the technical operation of a hydroelectric plant in Sredne Kolymsk. All of that time, they're wondering about Elizabeth Taylor. "What's with Liz?" they say to each other. "Is she keeping her weight down? Who's she married to these days? What ever happened to Eddie Fisher?"

The questions draw only shrugs. Nobody knows. *Pravda* doesn't have a gossip columnist. It runs editorials now and then saying that gossip is a symptom of bourgeois decadence. Thousands of people secretly listen to the Voice of America on shortwave radio, hoping to hear some news of Elizabeth Taylor, but all they hear is reports of atrocities by Russian troops in Afghanistan.

Some gossip seeps in, of course. Packages sent by Russian immigrants in Brooklyn to their relatives back home in Tbilisi and Kislovodsk contain jars of Skippy, chunk-style, wrapped in old copies of New York tabloids. Western tourists who are staying in Leningrad may leave behind a copy of *People* magazine that the chambermaid recovers from the wastebasket, painstakingly irons and then passes around, hidden behind the cover of *Soviet Agricultural Pioneer News*.

What little gossip there is, though, is often old and inaccurate. People who are separating the wheat from the chaff on a collective farm in the Ukraine pass the time by arguing about whether Barbara Hutton is going to leave Ali Khan. Old men in Azerbaijan think that Elizabeth Taylor is still married to Nicky Hilton. When all is said and done, they don't have any gossip in Russia.

When I finally came to grips with that fact, it made me realize that there are a lot of other things they don't have in Russia—TV game shows and miniature golf and take-out Chinese food and drive-in banks and commercials for bran cereals. No wonder they don't seem to understand what we're talking about when we try to negotiate with them. As Lenin himself used to say, they don't know where we're coming from.

All of which made me think that we may be on the wrong track with cultural exchange programs that send the Cleveland Symphony to the Soviet Union and the Kirov Ballet here. The Russians are familiar with symphonies. We're familiar with ballets. Maybe it would be better if we were both sent things we'd otherwise know nothing about. I don't know what the Russians could send us—that's the whole point—but we could send them something like gossip.

We'd start with a program that taught them how to have a domestic gossip industry. It would fit right in with *glasnost*. First, we train a lot of press agents, reminding the Soviet authorities of the old Russian proverb: A gossip columnist without press agents is a dairy farmer without cows. Then the Soviet columnists start doing some local items. ("The soulful tête-à-tête between Minsk party heavy Vladimir Selomentsky and Ukrainian harvest committee deputy first secretary Tanya Gunestkov at Boris Karputsky's après-May Day Parade bash has tongues wagging all over Zvenigorodka.") Gradually, they begin including items about American gossip-column regulars—the usual charity-ball trotters and glitz-hounds and previously owned debutantes. Then Frank Sinatra. Then, precisely on the schedule laid out in the new cultural exchange treaty, Elizabeth Taylor.

By that time, of course, we all know each other a little better. When Reagan and Gorbachev meet, they have the casual communication found in people with a shared culture. "What's with Liz?" Gorbachev says, as soon as he and the President are alone. "Is she keeping her weight down?"

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BEAT THE DEVIL.

Those Bleeding Breeders

"The obvious key to the success of Arab strategy is the presence, in the disputed territories of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank of the Jordan River, of Palestinian Arabs, people who breed and bleed and advertise their misery." This compassionate reference to the Palestinian situation comes from Ruth R. Wisse, in *Commentary* for May. These are the folk who complain about Jesse Jackson's insensitivity toward Jews.

What bothers Wisse is the "failure of nerve" of American Jewish intellectuals; said failure being squeamishness about the shootings and beatings meted out to the breeders. On her terms this failure was also exhibited in the Hebrew-language paper *Hadashot* on February 5, in which Abba Eban remarked, "We are living in a certain structural reality that is unprecedented. There is not another democratic regime on the face of the earth in which 35 to 38 percent of the total population under its rule are deprived of any clearly defined personal liberties and national identity, as has been the case in Israel for the past twenty years. . . . My view is algebraic: no state can exist with such a structure without wreaking havoc on the state as well, both in regard to its values and its identity. . . . In my opinion, justice demands that the ethnic and religious public known as Palestinians be allowed its right to live under Arab sovereignty."

Of course, you could dump a Palestinian in Jordan and say you had granted him his "right" to live under Arab sovereignty. Professor Israel Shahak of Hebrew University, who sends these translations from the Israeli press, adds that he finds Eban "particularly dangerous . . . because of his sophisticated brand of hypocrisy. As recorded in *Davar*, 19 February, 1988 (Yossi Melman and Daniel Raviv, 'The History of the Transfer'), while Israeli Minister of Foreign Affairs in 1967 he proposed to the Israeli government, shortly after the Six Days War, 'to encourage the immigration of the Arab refugees to Syria and Iraq'—i.e., the expulsion of a great part of the Palestinian nation to as far away from Palestine as possible."

There is much clucking about the "extremism" of Meir Kahane, who says straightforwardly that the Arabs should be kicked out, but deference to others saying the same thing less directly. Take Cynthia Ozick, whose diatribes are loyally printed by *The New York Times*. Back in November 1984 she contributed to *Congress Monthly*, the publication of the World Jewish Congress, something called "a prayer" and titled "The Living Brotherhood, Ishmael and Isaac." Ample citation is necessary for appreciation of her message:

> Merciful God, . . . look down on a wounded people, victims of rage and disarray, that portion of the Arab nation misfortune has come to designate Palestinian . . . : send this suffering generation of Palestinian children the rescuers it deserves.
>
> . . .
>
> The great landscape of the Arab nation lies all around these children, broad as the sea, stretching from Asia to Africa, encompassing more than a score of sovereignties, blessed with gifted and passionate peoples, all expressing a single culture and a single language, all under the noble wing of Islam . . . And yet no corner of the Arab nation . . . has opened its maternal gates to say, "My children, enter. You are ours: blood of our blood . . . come and make your home in our home."
>
> . . .
>
> Merciful God, . . . spare these abused and tormented children who speak with the tongues of explosives, . . . plant their feet in the home soil of their own people, the immense Arab nation renowned for unsurpassed hospitality even to strangers. . . . As the House of Israel gathered in all its scattered tears, refugees from the European cataclysm, refugees from the Arab Lands numbering as many as there are Palestinians, so let the welcoming Arab nation gather in Arab tears.

In other words, Israel and the occupied territories are for Jews, and the Arabs ought to piss off. Ozick had already solved to her own satisfaction the problem of ethnic identity and the Israeli state in *Esquire* for November 1974, when she remarked that "if I say *Jewish* and not *Israeli*, it is because they are one and the same thing and no one, in or out of Israel, ought to pretend differently any more." Hence the pressing need for the Palestinians to "plant their feet in the home soil of their own people."

Robert Scheer wrote up the results of an exceptionally extensive poll conducted by the *Los Angeles Times* and published on April 12 and 13. It seems that 11 percent of American Jews agree with Ozick and favor a "transfer," i.e., expulsion of an entire population from its native land; 29 percent favor the creation of a Palestinian homeland. A majority of non-Jews (52 percent) favor U.S. negotiations with the P.L.O., and 50 percent approve of a Palestinian homeland in the occupied territories.

Lenin to Fruit: Drop

The tug of war in President Reagan's mind continues. On the one hand his enthusiasm for Gorbachev as true heir to the great Lenin continues unabated. On March 21 he told Joseph Fitchett of the *International Herald Tribune* that Gorby "actually is advocating some of the things that Lenin talked about that were not as restrictive and single-minded as Stalin was." But minutes later his right frontal lobe went on automatic quote scan and came upon an old favorite, the overripe fruit fantasy. Lenin, Reagan told Fitchett, predicted that "the final battles would come in Latin America and then, as he put it, once they had seized that, they wouldn't have to take the United States. . . . It would fall into their outstretched hands like overripe fruit."

Ron loves this one, and it was a joy to see it back in action again after months of retirement in the Veterans' Home for Disabled Quotes. The general view is that it was made up by Goebbels.

A Disgusting Award for a Disgusting Paper

The Pulitzer Prize for general reporting this year went to the *Lawrence Eagle-Tribune* for what *The New York Times*

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ALEXANDER COCKBURN

described as "an investigation that uncovered flaws in the state prison furlough system." At the time I took it as this year's underdog award, designed to give the impression that the nation is blessed by scrappy local news sheets. Then word came from Massachusetts that the *Eagle-Tribune* series had been yellow journalism of the vilest degree. My colleague Kent Curtis amassed the articles and helped me review them. The news from Massachusetts was right. The *Eagle-Tribune* used an old and simple formula—find a crime, recruit a couple of hyperventilating politicians, and it's simple enough to stir up hysteria, particularly if the objects of the assault are killer convicts and a sensible program.

As do many other states, Massachusetts has a furlough program for murderers, including those convicted of first-degree homicide. The general idea is that in no modern penal system are people locked up until they drop dead of old age; in the end they leave prison, and when they do they should have some intimation of what life is like on the outside. Officials considering commutation or parole should also have some record by which to determine how a person behaves in a less restricted environment. Finally, prisoners without the slightest hope of parole or furlough can be more dangerous on the inside, to inmates and to guards.

When the *Eagle-Tribune* started dealing with the case of furloughed first-degree murderer Willie Horton, it had scant time for the considerations outlined above. Horton had been sentenced to life for the murder of a 17-year-old garage attendant named Joseph Fournier. Fournier had been stabbed nineteen times and dumped in a barrel. After being furloughed nine times with no delinquency, Horton was furloughed again, didn't return and was arrested nine months later in Maryland, having broken into a couple's house, tied up the man and then raped the woman twice.

For more than a year the newspaper played up the story, depicting a community (Horton was from Lawrence) quaking with fear at the thought of roving killers-on-furlough, interviewing victims and relatives of victims, who very naturally would like to see their assailants boiled in oil and dumped in a hole forever. It's easy journalism and never done more repulsively than by the *Eagle-Tribune*'s Susan Forrest, whose prolonged interview with the Maryland victims made Geraldo Rivera sound like John Chancellor. Throw in "local lawmakers" Joseph Hermann of North Andover and Larry Giordano of Methuen bellowing for citizens' justice. Add the newspaper's prostration before this demagogy. In the May 27 hearing, at which only one person spoke in favor of the furlough program, since only victims and police had been invited to testify, Joseph Hermann asked rhetorically, "What else could be more sexually dangerous than what this man did to young Joseph Fournier—taking the private parts of his body and what he did to them." Hermann confided to the committee that "Horton cut off the youth's genitals, put them in his mouth and then spit them out." This description was used again and again by the *Eagle-Tribune* in its "case" against the Department of Corrections. If Horton was a sexual offender he should not have been eligible for the furlough program, according to the paper. But the department's Kathy Ayers tells us there were no lacerations on Joseph Fournier below the waist.

In the end the *Eagle-Tribune* whipped up enough fear and hate to force a retreat on Governor Michael Dukakis, who finally gave way on March 21 and withdrew support for furloughs in the case of first-degree murderers. (Readers of the *Eagle-Tribune* would have had difficulty knowing that you can be convicted of first-degree murder in Massachusetts for driving the getaway car in which the killer is sitting.)

Ever since the *Eagle-Tribune* made it an issue, the furlough program has been picked up by conservative politicians at every level. On April 11 it reached the presidential candidates, in a debate in New York City. Al Gore referred to twelve "killers" who had escaped during furlough leave in Massachusetts. Dukakis, who probably hoped the whole thing would go away, made no coherent response. He could have told Gore the following. In fact, according to Ayers, in the entire sixteen-year history of the furlough program, eleven first-degree lifers escaped. All of them were ultimately returned. Eight of the eleven escaped during the first two years of the program; one escaped between 1976 and 1980; and two in 1986, when, due to the overwhelming success of the program, regulations were being loosened to include a few more people. Of the 96,886 furloughs approved while the program existed (including all prisoners and not just first-degree lifers) the escape rate was 0.6 percent during the first few years and 0.3 percent after 1976.

Susan Forrest's idea of good journalism was to take hatred polls—that is, if you can find enough people before deadline to say killers should be locked up and the key thrown away, such sentiments should determine social policy. The main target of the paper's onslaughts, Corrections Commissioner Michael Fair, stated at a hearing in mid-October, "If my son or daugher were the victim of any kind of crime against their person, I don't know if as a human being I could ever feel that justice was served." But he added, with some dignity, that a prison system could not be administered on the basis of such personal emotions.

On April 26 the Massachusetts House voted to end furloughs for first-degree murderers. The Senate is expected to agree. Tensions are already rising in the state's maximum security prisons. Susan Forrest will no doubt be on hand to describe such violence as may break out. The award to the *Lawrence Eagle-Tribune* is absolutely incomprehensible, unless one proposes that it was intended to signal intrinsic qualities of journalism: hysteria, racism, misrepresentation, salacity, barbarous ignorance.

Footnote: As he was last year, in the case of Charles Krauthammer's Pulitzer for commentary, *Nation* board member Roger Wilkins was complicit in this decision. I rang him up to abuse him, and he broke in on my strictures to announce that he could not discuss the deliberations of the prize givers, mounted his high horse and cantered away.

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BELTWAY BANDITS.

DAVID CORN AND JEFFERSON MORLEY

■ Borosage's Scorched-Earth Defense Secretary

Imagine Jesse Jackson reaching the White House and nominating arms control expert Paul Warnke as Secretary of State and Randall Forsberg, originator of the nuclear freeze, as head of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. Those suggestions appear in a draft paper on NATO written by Robert Borosage, former director of the Institute for Policy Studies and now a senior Jackson adviser. But Borosage has a real clunker for Secretary of Defense. He proposes to put the U.S. military compiex in the hands of Lee Iacocca, the man who brought us the exploding Pinto.

Before Borosage or anyone else succumbs to Iacocca hype and reaches for the résumé of one of the most overpaid corporate chiefs in America, he should at least review the Pinto episode, which occurred while Iacocca was president of Ford. Although its engineers had discovered design problems with the gas tank, the company still put the Pinto—known in-house as "Lee's car"—into production. Then, relying on a cost-benefit analysis, Ford waited eight years before correcting the defect. An infamous memorandum calculated that design changes necessary to prevent 180 deaths, 180 serious injuries and 2,100 torched vehicles would save $49.5 million in liability claims ($200,000 for each life, $67,000 for each injury, $700 for each car). But because the changes would cost $137 million, they were not deemed cost-effective. Remember what happened the last time an auto exec (Robert McNamara) applied cost-benefit analysis to military strategy? Body counts.

Asked by *Mother Jones*, which broke the story in 1977, if anyone at Ford had told Iacocca about the unsafe gas tanks, an engineer replied, "Hell, no. That person would have been fired. Safety wasn't a popular subject around Ford in those days. With Lee it was taboo. Whenever a problem was raised that meant a delay on the Pinto, Lee would chomp on his cigar, look out the window and say, 'Read the product objectives and get back to work.' " Would that be any way to run the Pentagon?

■ The Honduran Connection

On April 5, U.S. Marshals captured Ramón Matta, a suspected drug kingpin and friend of several top Honduran military officers, and brought him to the United States to stand trial. That same week the Drug Enforcement Administration reopened its Honduras office. The flurry of anti-drug activity raised the embarrassing question: Why did the D.E.A. close its office in Honduras between 1983 and 1988?

"There wasn't enough [smuggling] activity to justify an office there," says a D.E.A. spokesman. But in November 1984, F.B.I. agents in Florida intercepted a shipment of 760 pounds of cocaine from Honduras and arrested a top-ranking Honduran officer, José Bueso Rosa, for his role in a plot to overthrow and murder the President of Honduras, to be financed by the $10 million drug deal. And from 1982 to 1986 a drugs-and-arms network that supplied the *contras* operated out of Honduran airstrips, according to José Blandón, former aide to Manuel Noriega, and ABC News.

After Bueso was convicted, Oliver North and six other Administration officials pleaded for leniency in sentencing him. They were willing to overlook Bueso's association with drug smugglers because of his valuable, unspecified services to U.S. policy-makers. (Bueso pleaded guilty to two lesser charges and is now serving five years in a minimum-security prison.) The D.E.A. denies that it showed similar lenience toward the *contras*' patrons in the Honduran military when it closed its Tegucigalpa office. "We're not a political agency," the spokesman said.

■ Gritz for the Conspiracy Mill

The Christic Institute has found, in retired Col. James (Bo) Gritz, an unlikely supporter for part of its "secret team" theory. Over the past year Gritz, a former Green Beret who, with the help of a secret military unit, organized a Rambo-style mission into Laos in 1982 to search for U.S. soldiers missing in action, has tried to publicize a series of allegations reminiscent of those made by the Christic Institute.

Here's the short version of Gritz's tale. In 1986, with the White House's blessing, Gritz went to Burma to meet with drug warlord Khun Sa, who supposedly had information about M.I.A.s. Khun Sa was of no help on that count, but he surprised Gritz by saying he wanted to end the opium and heroin traffic in his territory and expose U.S. officials involved in drug smuggling. Gritz claims he took this message to the government upon his return and was told by Tom Harvey of the National Security Council that "there is no interest here" in Khun Sa's overture. (Harvey, now with the Pentagon, did not return our call.) Last May, Gritz again visited Khun Sa in Burma. In a recent letter to George Bush, who heads the National Narcotics Border Interdiction System, Gritz maintained that Khun Sa claimed he had once engaged in narcotics transactions with Richard Armitage, now an Assistant Secretary of Defense, and Theodore Shackley, the former deputy director for operations at the C.I.A., and other U.S. officials. Gritz attached a letter Khun Sa purportedly wrote to the Justice Department in 1987 spelling all this out.

Gritz also told Bush that Khun Sa had proposed to surrender one metric ton of heroin as a demonstration of his willingness to help eradicate drugs. So far, Bush hasn't responded. "It is clear to me that the 'top cop' against drugs has no interest in this offer," says Lance Trimmer, a private detective who traveled to Burma with Gritz last year. "Why? I know he was head of the C.I.A. in 1976 when Khun Sa said he was selling drugs to top C.I.A. officials in Bangkok."

Gritz and Trimmer complain that they have not been able to spark any Congressional or Federal investigation. They also assert they have been harassed by the Federal government. Is Gritz's story too good to be true? Both Gritz and Khun Sa have some credibility problems. But their charges show that the idea of a "secret team" of drug-dealing rogue U.S. officials is not an obsession only of the left.

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ARTICLES.

GALLUP IN CENTRAL AMERICA

Mixing Polls And Propaganda

WILLIAM BOLLINGER AND DANIEL M. LUND

"Perhaps it's not too fanciful to think that someday public opinion polls will help avoid wars," George Gallup Jr. told an audience in San José, Costa Rica, in March 1986. Just a week later, while lobbying for more aid to the Nicaraguan *contras*, President Reagan invoked the prestige of the Gallup organization as he announced that polls carried out by its Central American affiliate showed a large majority of Costa Ricans, Guatemalans, Salvadorans and Hondurans backed the U.S. war against Nicaragua. "In some countries," Reagan said, "the rate goes as high as over 90 percent of the people who support what we're doing."

Gallup's international affiliates regularly conduct secret public opinion research abroad on behalf of the U.S. government. Most of those studies, including the Central American polls, are commissioned by the U.S. Information Agency, the government's propaganda arm. Since 1983, the U.S.I.A. has used a Gallup affiliate in Costa Rica, the Consultoría Interdisciplinaria en Desarrollo (CID), to do its polling in Central America. CID/Gallup's founder and half owner is Charles Denton, a U.S. political scientist who has resided in the region on and off since 1945.

For the Gallup organization, these intimate ties between its foreign affiliates and the U.S. government pose serious problems—ethical questions over the misleading use made of results and doubts about the legality of introducing U.S.I.A. materials into domestic U.S. political debate. Gallup's most valuable resource is its reputation: The Gallup name is synonymous with credibility in polling. Its fame was earned through pioneering in survey methods, the promotion of polls as news events and the transformation of the results into a commodity marketed to the media. But it was also earned, beginning in the 1930s, through George Gallup Sr.'s visionary quest to strengthen democratic institutions and hold governments accountable to the popular will. Now, however, Gallup leaders in Princeton, New Jersey, appear to have franchised their reputation to local market research firms in the Third World with little regard to the problem of polling in undemocratic and conflict-ridden areas. They see the parent organization's responsibility as limited largely to insuring honest commercial practices and setting narrowly defined methodological standards. As a result, in Central America, the Reagan Administration found it remarkably easy to exploit the Gallup name for its own purposes in one of the most explosive political debates of the 1980s.

The U.S.I.A. routinely classifies poll results, according to Denton, in theory preventing even the Gallup affiliate that generated the studies from having access to them. The U.S.I.A. shares the data with U.S. intelligence agencies and the State Department, and also uses the information to influence world opinion, for example by distributing (or leaking) carefully selected results to local media abroad. The U.S.I.A. is barred by the 1948 Smith-Mundt Act from disseminating propaganda in the United States, and White House use of CID/Gallup surveys is therefore of questionable legality. Indeed, the Reagan Administration has tried to have it both ways. While Congress's intent was to prevent the agency from targeting U.S. citizens and manipulating the domestic media, the U.S.I.A. has used the prohibition to shield its activity from public scrutiny.

For two days after Reagan's spring 1986 announcement, reporters demanded that the White House substantiate its poll claims. But they were given the runaround. In Princeton, Gallup pleaded ignorance and referred inquiries to Charles Denton in Costa Rica. Denton said that the U.S.I.A. owned the survey results and had not authorized him to release them. The White House, State Department and U.S.I.A. all refused to release the full findings, withholding crucial information about the polls that would have allowed the public to evaluate critically their merit. Most reporters were never told, for example, that the polls had been limited to Central Americans with at least a seventh-grade education (a fraction of the general population) or that the crucial *contra* aid question had been "filtered"—asked only of those in the survey sample who indicated prior knowledge of U.S. support for the "Nicaraguan resistance."

Serious reporters who tried to track down the surveys, like Barry Sussman, then *The Washington Post*'s polling specialist, encountered a Catch-22. Gallup hid behind the autonomy of its affiliate, Denton hid behind the proprietary and classified nature of the U.S.I.A. data and the White House hid behind the prohibition on domestic use of U.S.I.A. materials.

The main political use of public opinion research has been in Central America, where U.S.I.A. propaganda gets a sympathetic hearing in the predominantly conservative local press; Denton has built good relationships with key local newspapers, which feature his poll results. In Costa Rica, for example, he gives exclusive rights to the archconservative daily *La Nación*. Denton's Costa Rica poll last September was his first to show that a majority of Costa Ricans opposed U.S. aid to the *contras*. That newsworthy

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fact—certainly a startling shift for anyone who had taken the earlier polls seriously—was buried deep in *La Nación*'s article, whose headline blared, "Costa Ricans Believe Nicaraguans Will Fail to Comply With Peace Plan."

Many scholars in Central America and Mexico have greeted CID/Gallup poll results with skepticism if not outright disbelief, and criticized Denton's apparent willingness to see his data misrepresented in the conservative media. "U.S.I.A. appears to encourage journalistic use which may not be justified by the polling results," says Miguel Basáñez, polling specialist at Mexico's National University. "A newspaper headline will read something like, 'Public Supports Reagan,' a highly contentious conclusion because in fact the poll data on their face don't seem to indicate that." Charles Denton responds that critics are just upset with the results, and he chides them for wanting to "shoot the messenger." However, both Denton and the U.S.I.A. feed the doubts by failing to provide even minimal information about how each survey was conducted. And what little is known about their questionnaires suggests that the polls may be geared to produce results that the U.S.I.A. can then use to advantage in its own propaganda.

Leonardo Valdés, a Mexican political scientist who heads a multiuniversity polling task force, reviewed six U.S.I.A. and CID/Gallup reports on Honduras carried out between 1983 and 1987 and concluded, "There is not sufficient information given to even begin to evaluate the method. We can't judge the merit of Gallup-U.S.I.A. polls over time. Some are only urban, others include rural areas. There appear to be social groups over- and underrepresented. The upper-income groups appear to be consistently overrepresented, where we can determine the base of a sample."

Valdés also criticizes the U.S.I.A. for the wording of its questions. "There is a tendency toward argumentative questions," he says, citing a January 1987 question on how "justly" the Sandinista government treats the Nicaraguan people. Valdés maintains that the question could be applied to the governments of Brazil or Mexico with similarly predictable results. It appears to be asked by the U.S.I.A. in Honduras and about Nicaragua because Washington has a political desire to use the material.

Professor Basáñez has also reviewed the Honduras reports given by the U.S.I.A. to the Central American media, and notes that figures since 1983 jump around wildly. "This is extremely suggestive—perhaps of a volatile situation, dynamic changes in the society, or dramatic differences in poll techniques and variations in the quality of the polling—but, who knows?" For example, the Honduran approval rating for U.S. aid to the *contras* appeared to shoot up 40 points between April 1986 and January 1987 in CID/Gallup polls, despite the impact on public opinion of the Iran/*contra* affair and the unfavorable publicity that the *contras* were receiving in the local Honduran media concerning crime and corruption.

Basáñez wonders whether political conditions in El Salvador and Honduras permit candid answers from respondents. "In a society of great social tension, the only valid interviews are street interviews, where anonymity can be preserved," says Basáñez. "The consistent use of home interviews, where people are visited and their names and addresses therefore can be determined, raises profound problems in terms of evaluating the honesty of responses. Neither U.S.I.A. nor Gallup discloses enough information to allow us to evaluate the quality of responses."

The disputed wording of U.S.I.A. poll questions is analogous to an ongoing debate in political and survey research circles over how questions about *contra* aid are phrased in U.S. polls. As Reagan Administration critics have pointed out, U.S. public opinion surveys have consistently shown majority opposition to *contra* aid. But pro-*contra* forces complain that polling organizations almost never frame their *contra* aid questions properly. There is some validity to this argument. A CBS/*New York Times* survey in April 1986 found only 25 percent supported "military and other aid to the *contras* trying to overthrow the government in Nicaragua." But that same month a *Time*/Yankelovich poll found 58 percent in agreement with the proposition that "the United States should aid the rebels in Nicara-

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gua in order to prevent Communist influence from spreading to other countries in Central America." As in politics generally, whoever can successfully frame the issue carries the day. And since, until recently, the U.S.I.A. and CID/Gallup have virtually monopolized political polling in Central America, they have been able to frame the questions any way they please.

Some Latin American intellectuals are sounding the alarm over the way in which public opinion research has been left in the hands of commercial firms subject to U.S. and local government manipulation and control. Pablo González Casanova, former rector of Mexico's National University, is one of several scholars working to establish independent academic polling institutions. "We need to take more initiative in the universities with regard to methodology and independent analysis," he says. "Without this, the political abuse of polls in Latin America will continue to grow."

In Costa Rica, Honduras and El Salvador, a number of scholars have already begun to produce surveys that illuminate the complexities of public opinion, far beyond the scope of U.S.I.A. and CID/Gallup results. From September to December 1987, random-sample surveys were conducted by the University Institute of Public Opinion (IUDOP), a department of the Jesuit-run Universidad Centroamericana (UCA) in San Salvador, the Psychology Research Institute of the University of Costa Rica and the School of Journalism of the National University of Honduras. Among their findings:

§ Opposition to U.S. *contra* aid and agreement with the Arias peace plan both rise according to respondents' education level.

§ The United States—not Cuba or the Soviet Union—was named by 79 percent of Salvadorans and 61 percent of Costa Ricans as the country that most meddles in the internal affairs of Central America; 88 percent of Hondurans said the United States is the country that intervenes most in their country's internal affairs.

§ When asked to choose whether the United States should support the Central American peace plan or continue to provide military aid to the *contras*, only 19 percent of Costa Ricans and 20 percent of Salvadorans surveyed embraced the Reagan Administration's position.

§ Asked which Central American leader best governs his nation, less than 2 percent of Salvadorans named their own President. Even members of his own Christian Democratic Party spurned José Napoleón Duarte, naming Costa Rican President Oscar Arias instead.

§ In defining the cause of armed conflict in Central America, only 12 percent of Costa Ricans and 4 percent of Salvadorans cited Communist subversion.

§ Asked what the United States should do to achieve peace in El Salvador, 63 percent of Salvadorans surveyed said "stop interfering," "halt military aid," "support peace negotiations (with the guerrillas)," or similar answers.

§ Salvadorans are the most deeply pessimistic people in the region, with 68 percent saying things are getting worse. Only 12 percent rated Duarte's performance in office as good or excellent, and less than 15 percent said El Salvador

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enjoyed democracy and political freedom.

§ Only 4 percent of Hondurans surveyed indicated belief in their government's fiction that there are no *contra* bases on Honduran territory.

§ Although not quite as confused as their counterparts in the United States, some Costa Ricans cannot accurately sort out U.S. friends and enemies in the region: 21 percent said the United States supports the guerrillas in El Salvador, while 11 percent said Cuba or the Soviet Union backed the *contras* against Nicaragua. Eighteen percent said they would approve of a U.S. invasion of Nicaragua.

The first regular university-sponsored polling in Central America was initiated in mid-1986 by IUDOP's Ignacio Martín-Baró, who was convinced that honest, scientific public opinion surveys were possible in El Salvador, despite the violence and political polarization of the civil war. He also believed that polling could contribute to democracy, peace and national independence in the region. He appears regularly on television to discuss IUDOP research. "We have to find ways for the results of public opinion surveys to revert dialectically back to the population," he says, seeing the surveys as mirrors held up to a populace, in the absence of viable democratic institutions, to validate people's "common sense."

Martín-Baró's twenty-six interviewers, all upper-level university students in psychology, sociology, journalism or law, were carefully selected for their skill in conversing with Salvadorans of all social classes. They vary in political outlook from liberal to somewhat right of center: Martín-Baró refuses to hire students who are active in either rightist or leftist political groups or who are so ideologically defined that they could not be objective in dealing with citizens whose opinions would place them in the "enemy camp."

The Universidad Centroamericana has conducted more than 14,000 interviews in ten of El Salvador's fourteen departments, but it avoids areas where civil war and militarization would make interviewing hazardous for both its IUDOP personnel and the respondents. IUDOP is careful always to announce how many respondents refused to be interviewed and to summarize the reasons given. Interviewers have found that the UCA's reputation for academic excellence helps win respondent cooperation. Only rarely—and usually in the wealthiest neighborhoods—does someone refuse to be interviewed because "the UCA is Communist." Most people who turn away the interviewers are poor women acting out of fear. "If I talk to you, they will come and get me," is a typical comment.

Experience now suggests that an assessment of levels of fear and ignorance in the populace surveyed should be a standard feature in disclosure of poll results from Central America. In Honduras, interviewers from the National University's Journalism School rated the degree of fear shown by respondents and whether or not they appeared to understand the questions asked. Only 38 percent were judged to have answered without fear or inhibition, and 20 percent were thought to have had serious difficulty in understanding the questions. When asked if they thought Hondurans were afraid of expressing their political opinions in public, 65 percent of those interviewed said yes.

In no country did more than 20 percent of those interviewed say the United States should defy the Arias plan and continue providing aid to the *contras*. Of course, the question was posed in the context of a peace process initiated by Central American governments. The local polls did not pose it, as U.S.I.A.-sponsored surveys are wont to, in the context of a series of questions probing for anti-Sandinista, anti-Cuban and anti-Soviet sentiment. But that is precisely the point.

Martín-Baró and his colleagues in the region make no claim that their studies are definitive, and one should be cautious of using any poll to prove that a precise percentage of Central Americans are now opposed to U.S. policy. Nothing in Central America is that black or white, and the great value of independent academic polls lies in the insights they can offer into the complexities and ambiguities of the political process in the region.

The findings of the independent polls cast severe doubts on the reliability of the Gallup affiliate in Central America, and the parent organization now faces further embarrassment as a result of Duarte's crushing defeat in El Salvador's March 20 municipal and National Assembly elections. While IUDOP surveys over the past two years charted a marked decline in popular support for the ruling Christian Democratic Party, recent CID/Gallup polls showed Duarte's party maintaining a healthy advantage over the right-wing Arena Party opposition. On the eve of the elections, IUDOP announced that its latest survey, conducted in the first week of March, showed that, while Salvadorans expressed little confidence in any political party, most were leaning toward Arena to register a "punitive" vote against the Duarte government. Julio Adolfo Rey Prendes, Duarte's controversial senior spokesman, went on television to denounce IUDOP and counter with CID/Gallup results that predicted solid Christian Democratic victories in at least seven of ten departments surveyed. Since the Gallup organization regards electoral results as the definitive test of a polling firm's honesty and competence, Arena's success in winning some 68 percent of the country's municipalities, including San Salvador, can only be a further blow to the already tarnished reputation of its Central American affiliate. □

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RALPH SCOTT'S CURIOUS CAREER

Rightist on the Rights Panel

BARRY MEHLER

Ralph Scott, professor of educational psychology at the University of Northern Iowa, in Cedar Falls, chairs the Iowa Advisory Commission on Civil Rights. State advisory commissions collect information relating to discrimination and pass it along to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, headed by Clarence Pendleton Jr. Scott was named to the post in 1985, although it is not clear who recommended him for it.

Scott's appointment was part of the Reagan Administration shake-up of the Civil Rights Commission in 1985-87, which included closing seven of its ten regional offices and replacing the heads of most state commissions with white males [see Mary Frances Berry, "Taming the Civil Rights Commission," *The Nation*, February 2, 1985].

The problem with Scott is that he is known in his hometown of Cedar Falls as an opponent of civil rights. In the 1970s he fought vigorously against school integration in the Waterloo district and filed a suit, later dropped, against three civil rights activists who called him a racist. "There's a fire that burns within me when I am described as a racist," Scott told *The Des Moines Register* recently. "I've always been committed to equity in education."

As Scott sees it, he's simply a white conservative fighting the bigotry and intimidation that liberals "unhesitatingly employ against professors who speak their minds." That's why he "reluctantly" disguised his identity in 1975 when he wrote *The Busing Coverup*, a 158-page book contending that black children have been victimized by school desegregation.

The Busing Coverup was put out by Howard Allen Enterprises of Cape Canaveral, Florida, a major publisher of neo-Nazi material. Howard Allen also published Wilmot Robertson's *The Dispossessed Majority* in 1972. Scott reviewed that book for *Spotlight*, a publication of the Liberty Lobby, which the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith calls "the best financed anti-Semitic organization in the United States." Scott found the book full of "mind-stirring ideas" and praised its "well-articulated and richly documented argument." The central theme of the book, he wrote, "is that Majority Americans such as the English, Irish, Germans, Poles and Scandinavians are getting short shrift in today's America which is essentially ruled by vigorous and united minorities."

Scott wrote, "For those majority Americans who seek to understand their cultural heritage, this book is a family must." The main argument of Robertson's book is that "the essence of history is the rise and fall of races." In the grand design of evolution, Robertson holds, one race will ultimately survive to give birth to "a new species, the better-than-man." The race best suited to shoulder this burden is the Northern European. In order to put things back on the evolutionary track in the United States, minority elements in the population could be separated out and either returned to their homelands or resettled in new ones. But this enterprise would be difficult because the American majority has been dispossessed by the Jews, who have acquired a stranglehold on the American mind.

Robertson propounds "a different brand of history," Scott wrote, one that "throws a bright clear light" on facts "which our politicians have kicked into dark corners." (Wilmot Robertson does indeed specialize in a different brand of history. His magazine, *Instauration*, is dedicated to the proposition that the Holocaust was a hoax.)

Ralph Scott's defense of the rights of the American majority has not been limited to print. In 1974 he was the American Party's candidate in the Iowa gubernatorial race. The American Party was started by George Wallace in 1967 as the American Independent Party, but when he left in 1972, the party lurched further to the right. Wallace was replaced by Tom Anderson, a founding member of the Council of the John Birch Society. By 1974, when Scott joined, the American Party had gained national attention by exploiting the violence that swept South Boston in the wake of desegregation. The party also gained the support of Billy James Hargis, leader of the Christian Crusade, and Willis Carto. Carto's Liberty Lobby distributed a tabloid, *America First*, "especially for use of the American Party."

In 1976 and 1977, Scott, under the pseudonym Edward P. Langerton, traveled around the country organizing a national anti-busing group, the National Association for Neighborhood Schools. In an interview with the Delaware *Evening Journal*, "Langerton" explained that he had to hide his identity to protect the $2 million in Federal funds that supported his research. When the *Evening Journal* revealed Langerton's true identity, Scott told its reporters that he might sue if he lost his grants. The newspaper later revealed that Scott had received no Federal funds. The money he referred to had been awarded to the Waterloo, Iowa, school district, and the amount was $1 million.

Scott's major anti-busing support actually came from the Pioneer Fund, which has long subsidized academic racists out to prove the intellectual inferiority of blacks. The fund was established in 1937 by Frederick Osborn and Harry Laughlin, leaders of the American Eugenics Society. The Pioneer Fund's first project was to bring a Nazi propaganda film on eugenics to the United States for distribution to schools and churches. More recently, the Pioneer Fund was associated with Senator Jesse Helms's CBS takeover bid.

Scott received more than $40,000 in some half-dozen separate grants from the Pioneer Fund in the mid-1970s. These included a $6,000 grant to send a University of North-

Barry Mehler was a member of the Institutional Racism Program and is a member of the history department at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. *He wishes to thank Ben O'Brien for research assistance.*

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ern Iowa student to Hattiesburg, Mississippi, to test the intelligence of "Anglo-Saxon" schoolchildren. The study was directed by the late Donald Swan, then assistant professor of anthropology at the University of Southern Mississippi at Hattiesburg. (When Swan, a longtime activist in the eugenics movement, was arrested for mail fraud in April 1966, authorities found Nazi paraphernalia, weapons, pictures of him with members of George Lincoln Rockwell's American Nazi Party, and hundreds of anti-Semitic, antiblack and anti-Catholic pamphlets in his home.)

Scott also used Pioneer funds to study "forced busing and its relationship to genetic aspects of educability," although he is not a geneticist. Other Pioneer money went to organize anti-busing conferences, out of which grew the National Association for Neighborhood Schools. When the Pioneer Fund was exposed by newspapers in Wilmington, Delaware, and St. Louis, Scott defended taking its funds, saying, "I don't see that there's any difference in getting money from Idi Amin as long as Idi Amin doesn't have any control over what I do with it."

Since Scott's appointment as chair of the Iowa Civil Rights Commission, he has been writing regularly about how black children suffer under desegregation for two journals, *The Mankind Quarterly* and *Journal of Social, Political and Economic Studies*, both edited by Roger Pearson. Virtually all of Scott's anti-busing writings have been published by Pearson. Scott served on the editorial board of the *Journal of Social, Political and Economic Studies* in 1984, and he joined the board of University Professors for Academic Order during Pearson's presidency of it. (Scott is its current president.) Pearson recently published Scott's monograph, *Education and Ethnicity*.

Pearson, a British-born anthropologist, has had a long career as a racial purist, that is, one who espouses the "purification" of the white race. He came to the United States in 1965 to edit *Western Destiny*, a journal published by the Liberty Lobby, which the Anti-Defamation League described as "Nazi-tinged." In 1978, Pearson and Earl Thomas, a former American Nazi Party storm trooper, helped organize a meeting of the World Anti-Communist League in Washington, D.C. An internal W.A.C.L. document circulated after the conference asserted that Pearson was associated with "Nazi/Fascist totalitarian ideologists and practitioners of the 1940s" and that he was responsible for bringing many of them into the W.A.C.L. Because of criticism over Pearson's Nazi connections, retired Maj. Gen. John Singlaub was named to replace Pearson as the W.A.C.L.'s American representative.

Ralph Scott's connections with eugenicists and neo-Nazi hangers-on are not characteristics of most American conservatives, although they are shared by some on the fringes of the Reagan Administration. But many of Scott's views on civil rights are in the conservative mainstream. Scott's belief that civil rights legislation persecutes the white majority and does not help blacks is echoed by Thomas Sowell in his book *Civil Rights: Rhetoric or Reality?*

Pendleton could not be reached for comment, but Civil Rights Commission spokesman John Eastman told *The Des Moines Register* that Scott "appears to have done an excellent job." Scott said in an interview that he has no memory of either reading or reviewing Robertson's *The Dispossessed Majority*, although he did not deny doing so. Eastman characterized the book as part of "the new social anthropology." He acknowledged that "it certainly wasn't a majority view," but added that "there was a fairly prevalent, large bit of scholarship that went along those lines in the 1970s." In response to an interviewer's question about the Liberty Lobby, Eastman asked to be "filled in on some details on this Liberty group because I would be interested." On the question of who appointed Scott, Eastman said that Linda Chavez, who was staff director at the time, could not recall who had suggested his name. But, he said, "I'm sure, they were looking a lot at affirmative action and minority set-asides and doing a lot of research on these issues, [and] that, you know, one of his writings on busing just came up—maybe they looked at one of the conference transcripts that he had put together and decided that he would be good up there."

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Mary Frances Berry, one of the last liberal members of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, said that Scott is "another appalling example of the way the Reagan Administration has corrupted" it. The commission, she told me, has become worse than useless: "It has become dangerous to anyone who is interested in furthering civil rights." □

1984 Vote

(*Continued From Front Cover*)

Security Council staff—believed the use of force was the only way to bring about democracy in Nicaragua and that the Sandinistas also had to go away, either through overthrow or removal. They supported Cruz in the expectation that he would not participate in the elections, thereby discrediting the vote. They regarded a U.S. negotiated deal with the Sandinistas as a sell-out.

For the U.S. hard-liners, the actual political situation in Nicaragua was irrelevant. They argued by syllogism. Communists never allow fair elections; the Sandinistas are Communists; for the opposition to participate in elections would legitimize Communist rule.

Although the conservatives kept a low profile, they were able to exercise substantial influence over events. Even Cruz was receiving Central Intelligence Agency funds by this time. "The other guys were able to run it by their complete penetration of the opposition," said a senior diplomat. "None of these people is independent any more."

The hard-liners worked to convince the internal Nicaraguan opposition to insist on election rules so comprehensive the Sandinistas would never accept them. Johnstone viewed these demands as "killers." President Reagan, as usual, did not choose between competing strategies or impose discipline on his subordinates but allowed the different power centers to pursue policy according to their interpretation of the goals.

In addition to the obstacles in his path at home, Johnstone faced a number of challenges in Managua. A major hitch was the divisiveness of the internal opposition, a central feature of Nicaraguan political culture that predated Sandinista rule. In an effort to gain cohesion, in 1982 the opposition formed an umbrella group, the Coordinadora Democrática, which tried to forge unity through making decisions by consensus. The group consisted of four political parties, two trade unions and representatives of six business organizations. The Coordinadora generated rhetoric and wish lists, but its cumbersome decision-making method lent itself to the tyranny of the minority of conservative businessmen, and it proved incapable of crafting a workable election strategy.

By early July, the Coordinadora had yet to choose a candidate. Under prodding by a visiting West German parliamentary delegation, a sort of rump Coordinadora consisting of two political figures, representing each end of the spectrum, got together and made the decision. They were Enrique Bolaños, a wealthy cotton grower and head of the Superior Council of Private Enterprise (COSEP), and Azucena Ferrey, one of the more dynamic women in Nicaraguan politics, who headed the Social Christian Party. The selection process took place "in the darkness of a tunnel," Bolaños said. They wrote down five names: Arturo Cruz; Adolfo Calero; Ismael Reyes, head of the Nicaraguan Red Cross; Alfonso Robelo; and Eduardo Rivas Gasteazora, deputy leader of the Coordinadora. "I said, 'Number one is O.K. with COSEP,'" Bolaños recalled. "'Number two has his finger on the trigger, no good. Number four is the same as number two. Number five is very sick.' So numbers one and three were O.K. with us, in that order."

Ferrey flew to Washington and asked Cruz to run. It was July 11, and the Sandinistas had set a deadline of July 25 for the registration of candidates. Bolaños and Ferrey agreed that if Cruz was willing, he should be the candidate of the entire Coordinadora. He agreed.

Besides diverging from democratic practice, the procedure for choosing the Coordinadora candidate deprived the anointed candidate of a political base; by virtue of the timing, he had no way of creating one on returning to Nicaragua. Cruz was everyone's candidate and no one's candidate. Ferrey wanted him to run under any circumstance. Bolaños's view was close to that of conservatives in Washington—he could not foresee circumstances in which Cruz should run.

Cruz's main constituency was in Washington, and Washington was split. Johnstone clearly hoped Cruz could find his way clear to register. White House officials said they supported the goal, but their sincerity was quickly called into question. Constantine Menges at the N.S.C. played a double game. According to Cruz, Menges encouraged him to enter the contest. Behind the scenes, Menges was busy drafting rhetoric for Reagan that suggested the election would be a farce before Cruz had even tested the waters. In back-to-back speeches in mid-July, Reagan blasted Nicaragua as "a totalitarian jungle" and belittled the election as a "Soviet-style sham." The words had an immediate impact on the ground.

"Reagan's rhetoric produces the triumphalism of the hard-liners. It means you abandon strategy," said Bill Baez, a close associate of Cruz, who, as head of the leading organization of Nicaraguan cooperatives, was one of the representatives of COSEP in the Coordinadora. Cruz concurred. "As long as the recalcitrant opposition has a reading of things that the United States eventually will invade Nicaragua and kick the Sandinistas out and say, 'Here, now, we will pick a king,' we will not be able to articulate our own policy and really address the issues we have to as Nicaraguans."

Even before setting foot on Nicaraguan soil, Cruz had reason to be ambivalent. With U.S. counsel divided, he was on his own. On the eve of his departure, Cruz gave a long interview to Fred Francis, an NBC television reporter, in

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Roy Gutman is national security correspondent for Newsday. *This article was adapted from his forthcoming book,* Banana Diplomacy, *to be published soon by Simon & Schuster.* *Copyright © 1988 by Roy Gutman.*

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which he assessed his chances. As the crew packed up, Cruz approached Francis. "You know I'm really not going to run. You know that." Francis threw out the interview.

Meanwhile, in Washington, the struggle had intensified between Johnstone on the one side and Menges, North and Casey on the other. Johnstone had been working with staff to prepare a new list of demands without the maximalist "killers," while his adversaries worked to avert a moderating impact. North's role by this time extended well into the policy process. At one Restricted Interagency Group meeting, Johnstone sought approval for a concept to test Sandinista promises for a pluralistic political system. North was trying to block it. "At least Constantine believes in democracy," Johnstone snapped. "You don't."

Johnstone won agreement in Washington on a modified set of conditions for participation in the elections, which Cruz essentially adopted as his own. They were: freedom of the press; freedom of assembly; access to voter registration lists and election returns; international observation of the elections; security of voting places; freedom to campaign on military bases; and postponement of the elections to allow at least ninety days of campaigning. The demand for a national dialogue between the Sandinistas and the *contras* was dropped.

But the scale-back of demands only galvanized opponents in Washington and Managua. Calero withdrew his commitment to back Cruz, and some U.S. officials urged the internal opposition to ignore the stated policy that Cruz should run if he obtained fair conditions. One such message came from the U.S. Ambassador to Costa Rica, Curtin Winsor Jr., a conservative businessman who was a political appointee and an outspoken proponent of overthrowing the Sandinistas. (Winsor once compared their rule to "an infected piece of meat" that attracts "insects.")

Winsor had known Bill Baez through business contacts for many years. At breakfast in San José on August 29, Winsor told Baez he had received word that the White House did not want the opposition to participate. "I think you should be aware of the problems and situation," Baez quoted Winsor as having said. "There is a division in the government. Some people in the State Department are saying you should participate. I represent the views of the White House. My opinion is that it is not appropriate to go."

Johnstone learned of the Baez-Winsor conversation from embassy reporting and flew to San José for a dinner with the Ambassador. "I don't know who you're getting your instructions from, but it is no known organ of government," he told Winsor. Once again, Menges was at work. He was certain that the Sandinistas would not hold a fair election and had said as much to Winsor. A further obstacle on the ground was C.I.A. operatives in Central America. "I know the C.I.A. was all against it. They were transmitting this loudly and clearly," said a source familiar with the thinking of Alfonso Robelo, the opposition leader who at the time was in San José. Cruz's son, Arturo Jr., who was frequently in the Costa Rican capital, concurred. "The State Department behaved in a very civilized way. But the sergeants of 'the Company' were behaving differently in the field. They were talking to their clients and saying 'Cruz is going to sell you out.'" And a Congressional source stated that Bolaños had at least two meetings with the C.I.A. station chief in San José at about this time.

The C.I.A. signals fortified the hard-liners in the Coordinadora in Managua, but also led to a profound misunderstanding. Those in Managua agreed with their counterparts in Washington on the intermediate goal of discrediting the elections but not on who should be the beneficiaries. The hard-liners in Managua hoped to destroy the legitimacy of the elections on the assumption that they themselves would profit. Those in Washington did it in hopes that the *contras* and the external military solution would benefit.

The crunch came in Rio de Janeiro on September 30, when Bayardo Arce, in charge of political affairs for the Sandinista Party, met with Cruz in the hotel suite of Carlos Andrés Pérez, a senior Socialist International official and former President of Venezuela.

These were the first real negotiations between the Sandinistas and the opposition since the election had been announced. It was the last best chance to resolve the Nicaragua dispute through political means. It was the decisive moment for U.S. policy. Johnstone said that, of all the efforts to reach a peaceful settlement, "that one came the closest."

The importance of the talks is undisputed. Exactly what went wrong in Rio is very much disputed. Nearly two years later, even Pérez, who chaired the talks, said he had not figured it out.

One reason is that both sides were engaged in gamesmanship. For Cruz, having registered so late in the election process, it was essential to gain a delay in the vote to avoid being accused by his associates of a sell-out. For the hard-liners in the Coordinadora, who wanted to discredit the process, it was essential to block Cruz from reaching a deal.

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The Sandinistas wanted to avoid a delay but also to avoid blame for the collapse of the mediation.

Pérez urged Arce to accept conditions within which Cruz could participate. He began with the nine demands that the Coordinadora had presented to the Sandinistas, separating out statements that would be regarded as ultimatums. The meeting lasted three and a half hours.

Arce and Cruz met again the following morning, Monday, October 1, this time in the presence of Hans-Jürgen Wischnewski, a close associate of Socialist International president Willy Brandt and several West German Social Democrats. Cruz was accompanied by vice-presidential candidate Adán Fletes and Coordinadora president Luís Rivas Leiva. Hanging over the talks was the latest deadline for registration, running out at midnight.

In one hour, the negotiations made remarkable progress. The Coordinadora presented its demands. In return for satisfaction, they promised to participate in the election if the date was postponed to February 24, 1985. Arce readily agreed to all the guarantees.

Cruz and his two colleagues asked for a break to confer with Managua. At the other end, opposition leaders gathered around a speaker phone in the offices of the Social Christian Party. Bolaños kept a low profile; the spokesman was Daniel Bonilla, an industrialist associate of Bolaños and perhaps the hardest of the hard-liners. And he was deeply skeptical. Bonilla was an ideologue. "Communists don't convene an election unless they have all the means to win it," he said in an interview more than a year later. "We don't believe in the elections. We would have lost. And there is nothing worse in politics than losing. That is not the worst thing. . . . It is that we would have made the Sandinistas win with our presence. My God, do you know what that means?"

After lunch the three negotiators denounced Arce's concessions as demagogy, demanded additional access to the official news media as a condition and required that the Sandinistas immediately agree to February 24 or some other postponement of election day. Then Arce dropped a bombshell. If the Coordinadora registered before midnight, the contest would be delayed until January 13, 1985, provided there was an effective cease-fire with the *contras*. Arce insisted that the Coordinadora declare a cease-fire by October 10 and that *contra* forces led by Adolfo Calero and Edén Pastora withdraw from Nicaragua by October 25. On the other hand, if the Sandinistas did not live up to their part of the bargain, the opposition could withdraw its registration any time up to October 25. The atmosphere in the room was suddenly electrified.

Cruz called Managua again. "My advice to you is you go and register," Cruz told his associates. "Do it, register, because we have all the necessary safeguards not to be trapped. Do something really meaningful, and we will really grow in stature."

"Arturo," Bonilla intoned, "whatever is going to be done is going to be done here. That is what the Coordinadora wants." Bonilla objected that the Coordinadora could not represent both the armed and the civic resistance. "I cannot have one single man representing the whole, because that would get the civic in bed with the military."

In Washington, Johnstone closely monitored the progress. He was in frequent touch with Baez, who was in Washington. Johnstone asked to be kept informed but felt Cruz should proceed. He also was in touch with Socialist International officials. "The United States government asked the S.I. to do its utmost to help the Coordinadora reach a deal," said a close associate of Brandt.

Working along with Johnstone was a senior C.I.A. official. Johnstone said each called contacts in the opposition and the Nicaraguan Democratic Force (F.D.N.) *contras* to keep them from backing away in the midst of the negotiations. The F.D.N. "were extremely concerned about not being undercut by third-force representation in elections that would legitimize the Sandinista regime," Johnstone said. He asserts that the C.I.A. supported his plan. "I was working out of the same room as the C.I.A. guy and unless some other part of the Agency was trying to undermine him, we were giving the same advice: Take part if you can get fair terms."

Despite the cold reception, Cruz thought he saw a way to bridge the differences. "This is the most exhilarating day in my whole life," he said that night. But the deadline passed without action.

A dejected looking Pérez received Wischnewski the next morning and pronounced the negotiations a failure. Actually, he had another card up his sleeve. Without telling his S.I. colleagues, Pérez had asked Arce to prepare a typed summary of the points of agreement, including the election postponement on condition of a cease-fire. Unannounced, an aide to Arce appeared with the document.

Pérez gave a copy to Cruz, who promised to return with a response at 4 P.M. Cruz checked with Managua, where he received more discouragement. Bonilla reiterated that the decision must be made in Managua.

Now Cruz dropped his own bombshell. Appearing at the appointed time, he went through Arce's paper point by point, wrote changes of wording, then agreed to it. He conditioned his signature upon a "vote of confidence" by the Coordinadora in Managua. If they did not back him, he would withdraw as their candidate. Arce reacted angrily. "In the beginning, they said a big fat no," Pérez said of Arce. "They said it was a joke to discredit the electoral process by doing this."

"I represent the Sandinista Front, and although only five *comandantes* are now in Nicaragua, I have committed myself here and now," Arce said. "But I have received no comparable pledge from Arturo Cruz; otherwise, the Coordinadora could have registered before the deadline. Either you sign now," he insisted, "or I don't sign."

Pérez stressed the significance of Cruz's personal commitment to return to Managua and put his name on the ballot, and for a brief moment Arce seemed to relent.

It was about 5 P.M. "For twenty minutes we had an agreement," said Thorvald Stoltenberg (now Norway's Minister of Foreign Affairs), who had joined the talks for the S.I. The two sides shook hands. "They were very, very pleased. We were starting to drink cognac." Stoltenberg

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suggested they type out the contents of the accord. Cruz dictated the final wording to Pérez. "Luís Rivas Leiva, as president of the Coordinadora, accompanied by Adán Fletes and Arturo Cruz, also agrees, both parties *ad referendum* to their respective organizations." Stoltenberg took a call from *Dagbladet*, a Norwegian newspaper, and broke the story to the press. An hour later, he had to phone the newspaper back and say the negotiations had fallen through.

Arce suddenly stood up, shook hands with the West German S.I. participants and bolted without further explanation. Cruz thought the signal had been given in New York City by Daniel Ortega. In an interview that morning in *The Washington Post*, Ortega had declared that the election would take place on schedule. "We were flexible on the date until a few days ago," he said. "The elections are going to take place on November 4. At this point we cannot continue to play with the date."

"Extending the campaign was never a position for us," said Sergio Ramírez, the campaign manager and candidate for vice president of the ruling party. "We always considered that it would be damaging for us because people would not be confident about our own elections if we did." Arce had made the offer in the knowledge it was unacceptable. Moreover, according to Ramírez, "Cruz never had authority over [*contra* military commander Enrique] Bermúdez and Calero . . . and the Coordinadora didn't have that authority."

Cruz said he had known that the Sandinistas were bluffing. "We had to be forthcoming and call their bluff, or to reach a real agreement if it was possible."

Arce went before a press conference. "Yesterday at midnight they lost their last chance to register. There is no longer any question. The elections will be held in Nicaragua on November 4."

Pérez said that information he received subsequent to the Rio meeting gave the impression that "the C.I.A. had given instructions, had put pressures [on representatives of the Coordinadora] against Cruz's candidacy, and therefore it wasn't accepted. They just didn't want someone with the prestige of Cruz to enter the elections, because it would validate them. They wanted to demonstrate there was no freedom of elections in Nicaragua." Pérez felt the "game" of the Coordinadora had been "simply to take away legitimacy."

On October 11, more than a week after the breakup in Rio, the Coordinadora changed its mind and backed the election accord. Stoltenberg of the S.I. flew to Managua, followed by Brandt, to ask for a postponement of the vote. But the Sandinistas refused. "The case was lost in Rio," Stoltenberg said.

Pérez said he never expected that the Sandinistas would let go of power, but thought the elections might have put Nicaragua on a course similar to Mexico: with left-of-center, semidemocratic, broadly based one-party rule. It was "not a solution to the problem, but it certainly was an opening." Cruz agreed, and his will be the judgment that lasts. "In hindsight," said Cruz, "we should have gone, with or without conditions." □

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BOOKS & THE ARTS.

Chomsky Then and Now

BRIAN MORTON

THE CHOMSKY READER. *By Noam Chomsky. Edited by James Peck. Pantheon. 492 pp. $24.95. Paper $14.95.*

THE CULTURE OF TERRORISM. *By Noam Chomsky. South End Press. 269 pp. $30. Paper $12.*

If only for the role he played during the Vietnam War, Noam Chomsky should be honored as a national hero. His later work requires delicate assessment . . . but let's begin at the beginning.

The antiwar movement was composed of several different strands. Many young people romanticized the National Liberation Front, cherishing visions of the gentle land Vietnam would become if the United States withdrew. Chomsky gave due weight to the fact that the N.L.F. and not the Saigon government represented Vietnamese nationalism, but he was never its partisan; he stressed that U.S. intervention in Vietnam was wrong in itself. "Just what might emerge from the shattered debris of South Vietnamese society, no one can predict with any confidence," he wrote in 1968. "It is clear, however, that under the American occupation there can be only unending tragedy."

When Chomsky looks back on the 1960s, his main concern is to defend the student movement, and so he speaks of the "notable improvement in the moral and intellectual climate" that it brought about. I think this is the right emphasis, but in putting it this way Chomsky doesn't quite do himself justice: it's easy to forget that he was often a sympathetic critic of the New Left. "We must guard against the kind of revolutionary rhetoric that would have had Karl Marx burn down the British Museum because it was merely part of a repressive society," he wrote in *American Power and the New Mandarins* (1967). "One who pays some attention to history will not be surprised if those who cry most loudly that we must smash and destroy are later found among the administrators of some new system of repression." He listened to the students, learned from them, argued with them.

Another strand of the antiwar movement was composed of the "pragmatic" or "responsible" critics: those who believed that the war was a misguided expression of our country's good intentions, and who turned against it only when they saw that we couldn't win it, or couldn't win it at an acceptable "cost." It was this strand that Chomsky criticized most searchingly, laying bare its misunderstandings with a sober passion. The war owed nothing to benevolent intentions: "As in the Philippines and Latin America, our efforts are directed to organizing . . . the society so as to ensure the domination of those elements that will enter into partnership with us." Nor was the cost of the war an admirable reason to oppose it: Chomsky urged a "recognition that what we have done in Vietnam is wrong, a criminal act." His critique of the war was clearly and unapologetically a moral critique.

Today, despite the best efforts of Ronald Reagan and an army of ideologists, the United States refuses to be cured of the Vietnam syndrome: we've prevented Reagan from savaging Nicaragua as earlier Presidents savaged Vietnam. In part this resistance is "pragmatic": not many objected to the quick and conclusive invasion of Grenada. But in part it's moral: Americans are no longer convinced that our government has the right to destroy any country it wants to. And to the extent that this is true, Chomsky, along with others like him, deserves much of the credit. He did his job well.

In case we were in danger of forgetting any of this, we now have *The Chomsky Reader* to remind us. A sampler of his political writings, the collection vividly illustrates the remarkable moral and intellectual consistency that he's maintained for more than twenty years.

Chomsky has often said that his political writings could have been done by anyone. In a sense this is true. There was nothing exotic about his critique of the U.S. role in Vietnam: He attempted no analysis of arcane economic or political structures. All he did was evaluate our government's actions by the same standards that we apply when we evaluate the actions of other governments.

Chomsky's accomplishment was to disenthrall himself from the delusions of nationalism. This is not to say that he tried to launch his critiques from somewhere in outer space: among the writers he drew on in his protest were Thoreau, Dwight Macdonald and Randolph Bourne. But he began from the premise that the United States "is no more engaged in programs of international good will than any other state has been." A simple enough idea, but one that most of the war's liberal critics could never bring themselves to accept.

Many writers slough off the nationalism they were born into; but most of them smuggle in a different nationalism through the back door. Part of Chomsky's moral authority derives from the fact that he's never done this. When he criticizes the United States for violating international law, we know that he would criticize any country that did the same thing.

I say "we," but this is just to be polite. Some of Chomsky's critics, with a comical inability to understand his point, have assumed that since he's such a severe critic of the United States, he must be some sort of Soviet apologist. This delusion won't survive the briefest glance at his writings.

An essay in *The Chomsky Reader* titled "Afghanistan and South Vietnam" makes this clear enough. Chomsky condemns the Soviet war against Afghanistan without reservation, and in exactly the same terms in which he'd condemned the U.S. war against Vietnam. He approvingly quotes from an editorial in *The Economist*: "An invader is an invader unless invited in by a government with a claim to legitimacy." He adds that "the government installed by the USSR to invite them in can hardly make such a claim, outside of the world of Orwellian Newspeak."

From his earliest political writings, Chomsky has been against both sides in the cold war. He views the cold war as an arrangement from which both superpowers benefit. The United States and the Soviet Union, he believes, are united in suppressing any strivings toward independence in less powerful nations. In the case of Nicaragua, for instance, Chomsky believes that the Reagan Administration has pursued a dual strategy. Its maximal goal has been to regain the kind of domination it enjoyed during the Somoza era. Its minimal goal has

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been to drive Nicaragua into the Soviet camp—to turn the country into the repressive Soviet satellite that Reagan claimed it already was.

There's some evidence for this picture of the cold war. In Seymour Hersh's *The Price of Power*, for instance, a former aide to Henry Kissinger is quoted as saying that Kissinger "saw Allende as being a far more serious threat than Castro. If Latin America ever became unraveled, it would never happen with a Castro. Allende was a living example of democratic social reform."

I do think Chomsky often draws this picture too neatly. Reagan and his men may simply be too stupid to have entertained a strategy as sophisticated as this. E.P. Thompson's view of the cold war is close to Chomsky's, but less mechanical: Thompson has more sense of the strains within and between the blocs. He too says that the superpowers are playing a game that suits them both; but he has more feeling for the danger that at any moment one of the players might sweep away the cards, knock over the table, and lunge for the other's throat.

As Chomsky makes clear in an interview that serves as a sort of introduction to *The Chomsky Reader*, he's been strongly influenced by anarchist thought, and accordingly maintains a healthy disrespect for all nation-states. The only trace of nationalism I can find in his writings is a negative one: He maintains that, as a U.S. citizen, he has a special responsibility to protest the crimes of the United States. He explained his view of the cold war, and of his own responsibilities, in *On Power and Ideology* (South End Press), a collection of lectures he gave in Nicaragua. After one talk, a member of the audience was disturbed that he had referred to Soviet "imperialism." Chomsky commented:

> There are two superpowers, one a huge power which happens to have its boot on your neck, another, a smaller power which happens to have its boot on other people's necks. In fact these two superpowers have a form of tacit cooperation in controlling much of the world.
>
> My own concern is primarily the terror and violence carried out by my own state, for two reasons. For one thing, because it happens to be the larger component of international violence. But also for a much more important reason than that; namely, I can do something about it. So even if the U.S. was responsible for 2 percent of the violence in the world . . . it would be that 2 percent I would be primarily responsible for.
>
> . . .
>
> But I am also involved in protesting Soviet imperialism. . . . And I think that anyone in the Third World would be making a grave error if they succumbed to illusions about these matters.

Chomsky's brand of libertarian socialism has few friends today. But this doesn't explain why he elicits such violent reactions. It's strange, isn't it, that he's never invited to write for *The New York Times* Op-Ed page or its *Book Review*, or for *Harper's*, or *The Atlantic*, or *The Village Voice*. Why is he so isolated?

In the Autumn 1985 issue of *Grand Street*, Christopher Hitchens examined the standard cases against Chomsky. It may be worthwhile to go over them again, both because many people never saw the article and because Hitchens, at some points, was too intent on acting as a counsel for the defense. He would have shown Chomsky more respect by arguing with him more.

One charge can be disposed of quickly. We sometimes hear that Chomsky was an apologist for the Khmer Rouge. His great offense, as it turns out, was to analyze critically the U.S. media's treatment of Cambodia. He never denied that terrible things were happening there: In *The Political Economy of Human Rights*, written with Edward S. Herman, he said that "the record of atrocities in Cambodia is substantial and often gruesome," that the Cambodian revolution was "one of the bloodiest" of the twentieth century, and that "when the facts are in, it may turn out that the more extreme condemnations were in fact correct." But he objected to the way in which ideologists here seized upon the most extreme claims, with no attempt to evaluate them, as a retrospective justification for the Vietnam War.

As Chomsky pointed out, massacres of similar scale were being committed at the same time by Indonesia in its invasion of East Timor. The United States could have used its considerable influence with Indonesia to stop these massacres. But the same editorialists who drew so much attention to Cambodia said almost nothing about East Timor. Cambodia was ideologically serviceable; East Timor was not.

Chomsky's attacks on Western ideologists did have a certain jeering tone, which, given the gravity of the subject, was out of place. *The Chomsky Reader* includes a more recent essay on Cam-

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bodia that is free of this tone.

The second complaint against Chomsky is that he defended the "right to lie" of Robert Faurisson, the French Holocaust revisionist. Faurisson, a professor of literature, had come out with an article denying the existence of the gas chambers. He was suspended from his classes—supposedly for his own protection, after he was assaulted by students—and was brought to trial for "falsification of history." Chomsky was asked to sign a petition that called on university and government officials to "ensure [Faurisson's] safety and free exercise of his legal rights," and he did so. The petition contained no endorsement of Faurisson's views. When Chomsky was assailed for having signed the petition, he wrote a short statement, "Some Elementary Comments on the Right of Freedom of Expression," to clarify his reasons. Without Chomsky's consent, the essay was used as a preface for a book Faurisson wrote. Ever since then, Chomsky has been dogged by the charge that he endorsed the ideas of a neo-Nazi.

Chomsky wrote several things during this episode that should make even his admirers uncomfortable. By this I mean that he wrote several things that make ***me*** uncomfortable. We'll get to them later. The important point is that he's never written anything that can be taken as an endorsement of Faurisson's claims. Never.

His "Elementary Comments" essay was a straightforward defense of freedom of speech. Chomsky argued that "it is precisely in the case of horrendous ideas that the right of free expression must be most vigorously defended"—otherwise the right will not survive. In other statements on this question he repeated what he'd written years before: that the Holocaust was "the most fantastic outburst of collective insanity in human history." In an interview with the French newspaper *Libération* he clarified his position further, saying that "it is not by silencing [Faurisson] that you prove that his theses are ill-founded. It is by using all the documents, all the testimony of witnesses now at our disposal—and God knows that they are not lacking—in order to produce an irrefutable denial." Clear enough?

Chomsky is immensely productive: I'm reviewing two of his books because he came out with a second one before I could finish writing about the first. I can think of fifteen books he's published on political subjects, and I'm probably forgetting a few. If he did harbor any sneaking agnosticism about the existence of the Holocaust, it would have leaked out somewhere in his work.

No one who has attacked Chomsky on the Faurisson issue has ever tried to support the case with evidence from his other writings. There's a good reason for that—the evidence all goes the other way. Chomsky refers to Nazism often, and he always has; but never in the style of an agnostic. He's always given keen attention to the way governments do violence to language when they seek to mask the violence they do in the world. And when he wants us to see the wickedness of some apparently neutral phrase, he asks us to imagine it in the mouth of a Stalin or a Hitler. This is his standard method. From his earliest writings to his latest, Nazism has served him as a benchmark of pure and unquestionable evil.

Chomsky is a conscientious civil libertarian: He always signs petitions, in support of everybody's right to speak. If he had made an exception of Faurisson, ***that*** would have been odd. Some people have said that the revival of anti-Semitism in France makes this a special case. Chomsky's reply is that he doesn't think we should fight racism by denying racists their legal civil liberties.

It makes me angry that the ignorant and malicious picture of Chomsky as "soft on Nazism" is so widely believed. It makes me angry that I feel obliged to waste so many words going over it all again. If people want to argue with him, let them argue honestly; I want to argue with him too. But to harp on Faurisson is nothing but a way of avoiding real argument. And, sad to say, it's worked. Chomsky has become one of those people you don't have to read anymore. When his name comes up, sophisticated people smile. Chomsky . . . we all know where ***he*** ended up, don't we?

If some people cling to a distorted interpretation of the Faurisson affair, this may be because it helps them shrug off Chomsky's views about the Middle East.

"Surely it is obvious," Chomsky once wrote, "that a critical analysis of Israeli institutions and practices does not in itself imply antagonism to the people of Israel, denial of the national rights of the Jews in Israel, or lack of concern for their just aspirations and needs. The demand for equal rights for Palestinians does not imply a demand for Arab dominance in the former Palestine, or a denial of Jewish national rights." If he believed this was obvious, he was optimistic. Fifteen years of wild responses to his writings on the Middle East have proved that it isn't obvious at all.

If Chomsky has acquired the reputation of being America's most prominent self-hating Jew, this is because, in the United States, discussion about the Middle East has until recently taken place within very narrow bounds. As Chomsky has often pointed out, many views that are considered at least worthy of discussion in Israel are considered unspeakably extreme here.

The many people who "know" what Chomsky thinks about the Middle East without having read his books might be surprised to learn that he views the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians as a conflict of "right against right"; that he calls for a two-state solution; and that he's repeatedly condemned the violence of the Palestine Liberation Organization as well as that of Israel.

Those who have read Chomsky's books on the Middle East and who thought them too critical of Israel might be surprised if they took another look at them now—now that the Palestinian uprising and the policy of "force, might, beatings" have made the ugliness of the occupation impossible to ignore. What struck some readers as inflamed hyperbole a few years ago seems common sense today.

On an issue as delicate as this, it's better to quote than to paraphrase. This is what he was writing in 1969:

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It is natural to think that security can be achieved only through strength and through the use of force against a threatening opponent. Perhaps so. But those who adopt this course must at least be clear about the likely dynamics of the process to which they are contributing: occupation, resistance, repression, more resistance, more repression, erosion of democracy, internal quandaries and demoralization, further polarization and extremism on both sides, and ultimately—one shrinks from the obvious conclusions. It is not evident that security is to be achieved through the use of force.

. . .

Terroristic attacks on civilians simply consolidate Israeli opinion and drive the population into the hands of those who advocate the reliance on force. If this process does succeed in destroying Israeli democracy and turning Israel into a police state, the Palestinian Arabs will have gained very little thereby. Similarly, collective punishment, razing of houses and villages, detention, and exile, surely have the effect of strengthening the hands of those in the Palestinian Arab movement who see the physical destruction of Israeli society as the only solution.

Shocking? Extreme? What's shocking is that this was once considered extreme. Chomsky's great crime was to look at the realities of the occupation when most Americans preferred not to. He once wrote that American "supporters of Israel"—those who believe their support precludes criticism—might better be described as supporters of the moral degeneration of Israel. Was he wrong?

Chomsky has written two books about the Middle East. In *Peace in the Middle East?*, published in 1974, he urged a reconsideration of the old Socialist-Zionist dream of a binational state. By 1983, when he published *The Fateful Triangle*, he was no longer writing of such prospects. Most of the book is about the brutality of Israel's treatment of the Palestinians and the hypocrisy of most U.S. commentary on the Middle East. He criticizes Israel's refusal to negotiate with the P.L.O., which clearly represents the Palestinian people; he contrasts the "halting and sometimes ambiguous steps" that the mainstream of the P.L.O. has taken toward the acceptance of a two-state settlement with Israel's unwavering refusal to consider it; and he gives a long account of Operation Peace for Galilee—the 1982 invasion of Lebanon.

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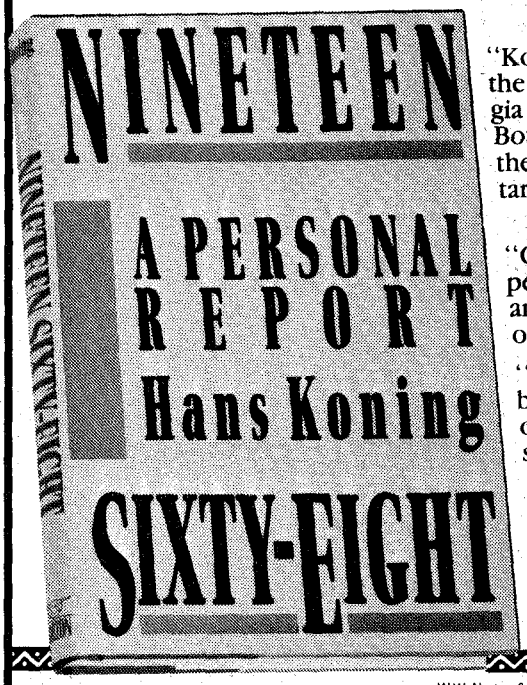

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These are both extraordinary books. But if we put them side by side, we begin to sense a change in Chomsky's work, and not a pleasing change. You might say that Chomsky's political writings thus far can be divided into two periods, or two manners, with the break occurring somewhere in the late 1970s. The change is evident in all his writings; but since he's written only two books about the Middle East, one in each of what I call his two periods, the change is easy to spot when we compare them.

The shift I think I sense is that, in Chomsky's later work, we hear less of a humane, less of a human voice. Take a look at chapter one of ***Peace in the Middle East?*** Chomsky begins by thanking his Arab and Israeli students for their helpful criticisms, adding that "from many conversations with them, I feel that they are much closer to one another, in their fundamental aspirations, than they sometimes realize." Before discussing the problems of the Middle East in general, he talks about his personal reasons for caring about the subject:

> I grew up with a deep interest in the revival of Hebrew culture associated with the settlement of Palestine. I found myself . . . enormously attracted, emotionally and intellectually, by what I saw as a dramatic effort to create, out of the wreckage of European civilization, some form of libertarian socialism in the Middle East. My sympathies were with those opposed to a Jewish state and concerned with Arab-Jewish cooperation, those who saw the primary issue not as a conflict of Arab and Jewish rights, but in very different terms: as a conflict between a potentially free, collective form of social organization as embodied in the Kibbutz and other socialist institutions on the one hand, and, on the other, the autocratic forms of modern social organization, either capitalist or state capitalist, or state socialist on the Soviet model. . . . I mention all of this to make clear that I inevitably view the continuing conflict from a very specific point of view. . . . Perhaps this personal history distorts my perspective. In any event, it should be understood by the reader.

Disavowing any claims to expertise, Chomsky also disavows any belief that Americans can solve the problems of the Middle East. But he says that "it is conceivable that Americans might make some contribution to the passive search for peace, by providing channels of communication, by broadening the scope of discussion and exploring basic issues in ways that are not easily open to those who see their lives as immediately threatened."

I find these passages beautiful. This earlier book, and his early work in general, seems the work of a man deeply patient, deeply reasonable, deeply humane. It's suffused with a luminous moral intelligence.

By the time he wrote ***The Fateful Triangle***, his way of expressing himself had coarsened. This is from the second page of that book:

> Clearly, as long as the United States provides the wherewithal, Israel will use it for its purposes. These purposes are clear enough today, and have been clear to those who chose to understand for many years: to integrate the bulk of the occupied territories within Israel in some fashion while finding a way to reduce the Arab population; to disperse the scattered refugees and crush any manifestation of Palestinian nationalism or Palestinian culture; to gain control over southern Lebanon. Since these goals have long been obvious and have been shared in fundamental respects by the two major political groupings in Israel, there is little basis for condemning Israel when it exploits the position of regional power afforded it by the phenomenal quantities of U.S. aid in exactly the ways that would be anticipated by any person whose head is not buried in the sand.

The dominant feeling of the later book, as I read it, is anger. It's an admirable anger—he's angry about militarism and racism cloaking themselves in high morality—but I miss the gentleness that once accompanied the anger. Chomsky continues to say that the struggle between Israelis and Palestinians is a struggle of right against right: that hasn't changed. But the music is different. In his early work he wrote understandingly of the fears that keep each side from seeing the justice of the other's claims. He tried to be a peacemaker. He isn't trying to be that anymore.

In ***Peace in the Middle East?*** he writes that the Jewish "policy of ***Havlagah***—restraint—in the late 1930s was not only a moral achievement of the highest order, but was also, it seems, reasonably effective as a tactic. There were groups in the Jewish settlement that did believe in the resort to terror. . . .[but] tensions between these groups and the Socialist-Zionist settlers 'erupted in a miniature Jewish civil war early in the 1940s.'" In ***The Fateful Triangle*** he writes of the history and prehistory of

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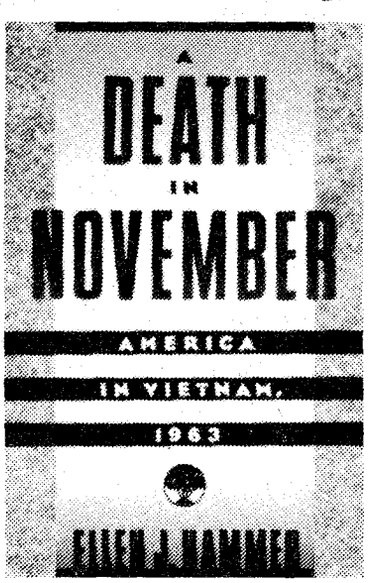

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the Jewish state almost as if it consisted of nothing *but* terror. He wrote the book just after the invasion of Lebanon, and he was exasperated by the widely held fiction (held less widely now) that Israel is uniquely gentle, even in war. He tells an important part of the story—the part that's traditionally been neglected or suppressed. But he tells it as if that's all there is to the story.

In Chomsky's early work, he was often careful to stress that he was offering opinions on subjects about which reasonable people might differ. The best example is "Objectivity and Liberal Scholarship," a 1968 essay included in *The Chomsky Reader*. Here he subjects the work of the historian Gabriel Jackson to a stringent critique, but keeps reminding the reader that Jackson's work is "outstanding," "of very high caliber." I can find no comparable example of charity toward an intellectual opponent in his later work. He now seems to believe that the people he criticizes fall into one of two classes: liars or dupes. He's grown fond of phrases like "no rational person would deny," "no sane person could fail to see"—there are one or two of them in the passage I quoted from *The Fateful Triangle*. Even when he uses such phrases to introduce a claim that no rational person *would* deny, I still find it chilling. His fondness for such phrases sits uneasily with his libertarianism—there's a whiff of authoritarianism about them. I don't say that Chomsky has abandoned his libertarian beliefs; only that they're no longer so fully evident. They were once present even in his style. I don't think this is so anymore.

Chomsky's prose style was once measured, calm: it was a style that evidenced a faith in reason. From his current style, I get the impression that he continues to expose the reigning lies only because it's the moral thing to do, not because he expects to accomplish anything. Chomsky wouldn't *say* he believes this, for he always reminds his readers of the power of popular resistance. And yet his style exudes despair. In the old work as in the new, he criticizes the conformity of U.S. intellectuals. But look at his early essay "The Responsibility of Intellectuals," and then look through *The Culture of Terrorism*. In the early piece, he refers to "a real or feigned naiveté with regard to American actions," to a "failure of skepticism," to "the intellectual attitudes that lie in the background of the latest savagery." He criticizes the intellectuals as a class, yes, but it's clear that the class is composed of human beings: The phrases I've quoted imply a world of human agency, a world in which people can sometimes be persuaded by reasonable arguments. When he speaks about conformity in his recent work, it's in a different voice. The Iran/*contra* scandal "imposed new demands for the ideological system, which must control the domestic damage and ensure that it is confined within narrow and politically meaningless bounds"; "furthermore, similar situations are bound to arise in the future, and historical engineering must ensure, without delay, that the proper arsenal of lessons will be available, to be deployed when needed." It's no longer human beings who put forth misleading ideas: it's "the ideological system," the "doctrinal system" or "historical engineering." Chomsky has become more structuralist. His later tone is that of a man who doesn't expect anything to change.

When I think of Chomsky's recent work, I think of Yeats's lines about Jonathan Swift: "Savage indignation . . . lacerate[s] his breast." Chomsky is savagely indignant because the values he cherishes are being strangled. But increasingly, the reasons for his indignation—the values he cherishes—are hard to see in his work. Only the indignation is clear.

One reason the Faurisson business has continued to dog him is that his exasperation led him to express himself in a way that invited misunderstandings. In the last paragraph of the "Elementary Comments," he abruptly swerves away from the narrow and admirable defense of free speech to which he'd devoted the rest of the essay. "Putting this central issue aside," he writes, "is it true that Faurisson is an anti-Semite or a neo-Nazi? As noted earlier, I do not know his work very well. But from what I have read—largely as a result of the nature of the attacks on him—I find no evidence to support either conclusion. . . . As far as I can determine, he is a relatively apolitical liberal of some sort."

This is strange. How can he absolve Faurisson of the charge of anti-Semitism if he doesn't know his work very well? And even if he knew Faurisson's work by heart, wouldn't he have to be morally tone-deaf to brush aside the question of anti-Semitism so brusquely? Responding to critics on this point, Chomsky has explained that Faurisson

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has said that those who resisted the Nazis fought in the "right cause." It's conceivable, perhaps, that one can deny the existence of the gas chambers without being an anti-Semite. But if Chomsky thought this a point worth making, he should have argued it through, sensitively and patiently and clearly. Instead, he made a high-handed assertion, and left it at that.

Earlier in the "Elementary Comments" he refers to a critic's remark that the original petition supporting Faurisson's right to expression was "scandalous." Chomsky writes that this critic evidently misunderstood the petition's reference to Faurisson's "findings": "It is, of course, obvious that if I say that someone presented his 'findings' I imply nothing whatsoever about their character or validity; the statement is perfectly neutral in this respect." But in fact, the word is ambiguous: It can mean opinions, or it can mean discoveries. Chomsky must know this: I take it that the author of *The Logical Structure of Linguistic Theory* has a dictionary. Why couldn't he have acknowledged that the word is ambiguous? What would it have cost him to acknowledge that the petition should have been worded more precisely? The basic issue remains the same: Chomsky can be justly proud of his support for free expression. But why can't he admit that, about this one word, he was really, just a little bit, *wrong*?

Replying to another critic, Chomsky said that he had often spoken "in support of the right of people I regard as war criminals to teach or even to conduct counterinsurgency research, at a time when it was being used to murder and destroy." This is true: Anyone who looks at David Caute's new book on 1968, *The Year of the Barricades*, will see that Chomsky consistently defended the rights of men he must have hated. He adds, "Since these stands evoked no protest, it follows that the uproar over my defense of Faurisson's rights is an exercise in hypocrisy, pure and simple."

Well, no. It *would* follow, if people were moved solely by logic. But they aren't; and it doesn't follow at all. I have no doubt that many people keep this thing alive dishonestly, because it delights them to discredit Chomsky in any cheap way they can. But there are many people who don't have the time to sift through every exchange between Chomsky and his critics, and who, reading phrases from him like "apolitical liberal," have thought the case closed. They judge too quickly, but it's easy to understand why they do. A fair-minded person who studied the matter would conclude that Chomsky is innocent of having endorsed Faurisson's views. But I suspect this person would conclude that Chomsky was innocent of sensitivity as well.

In the 1960s, Chomsky was widely respected. His articles on the war appeared in *The New York Review of Books*; Norman Mailer referred to the "tightly packed conceptual coils of Chomsky's intellections"; "his name," as Hitchens puts it, "had a kind of cachet." Around the mid-1970s this changed. *The New York Review* quietly dropped him; other liberal magazines followed suit. Perhaps his radicalism no longer appealed to them after the end of the war; perhaps they objected to his views on the Middle East. Cambodia and Faurisson gave the final turn to the screw. Chomsky is now treated with a weird mixture of neglect and abuse. His books are seldom even reviewed—he's not important enough for that, you see—but just about every journal in the country finds space to drop snide misrepresentations of what he's written about Cambodia, the Holocaust, Israel or anything else.

It's this, I think, that's put the bile in his voice. As he's been forced to the margins, he's become strident, rigid. But even if this does account for the change in his manner, it doesn't justify it.

The problems of Chomsky's later work are similar to the problems of the later work of Karl Marx—a writer whom Chomsky resembles a bit, in his searing logical rigor and his surgical sarcasm. Ignorant critics of Marx like to argue that his thought led in a straight line to Stalinism. It's a stupid idea, but I've often wished it were more *obviously* stupid.

After his beautiful philosophical work of the 1840s, Marx turned away from the language of morality. He grew so disgusted with the hypocrisies of bourgeois morality that he began to style himself an antimoralist, delighting in reductive demonstrations that moral claims were nothing more than masks for economic interests. Bending to a Darwinist age, he began to write as if socialism were an inevitability rather than a future that men and women might choose. He began to write in a less human voice. If you want to spend a month or so in the library you can come up with a strong case that Marx remained a humanist, remained an advocate of freedom to the end. But I've often wished that his voice were so humane, so generous, that this would be obvious to anyone who glanced at his work.

I wish the same of Chomsky. He's taken on too much of the harshness of the world he struggles against. I'd like to see him bring back into his work some of the gentleness, the generosity, of the world he envisions.

I look over what I've written, and I think it's right. But I'm hesitant about it all the same. I don't like the thought that my criticisms might be read with satisfaction by the people who enjoy misrepresenting Chomsky. So perhaps I should say explicitly that I take the trouble to argue with him only because I think he's the most valuable critic of American power that we have.

In *American Power and the New Mandarins*, Chomsky's first book of political essays, he gave us his responses to an unusual display in Chicago's Museum of Science and Industry. "What can one say about a country where a museum of science in a great city can feature an exhibit in which people fire machine guns from a helicopter at Vietnamese huts, with a light flashing when a hit is scored? What can one say about a country where such an idea can even be considered? You have to weep for this country."

From his earliest writings to his latest, Chomsky has looked with astonishment at what the powerful do to the powerless. He has never let his sense of outrage become dulled. If his voice has grown hoarse over twenty years, who can blame him? And who can feel superior? No one has given himself more deeply to the struggle against the horrors of our time. His hoarseness is a better thing than our suavity. I think again of Yeats's lines on Swift: "Imitate him if you dare . . . he/Served human liberty." □

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Spring Poetry Supplement

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I pulled my mother's baby-blue Thunderbird
into a parking garage on the corner of Michigan and Lake
on a late-afternoon in mid-December, one
of those slushy Chicago dusks
when the air thickens around the Christmas lights
strung through the evergreens that line the sidewalks,
and the diligent rush-hour traffic creeps along the lakeside
as if in obedience to a secret commandment,
and the shoppers sift through the fog.
The car hummed on the downward-spiraling ramp
and glided to a halt in front of a booth
where a familiar-looking attendant in uniform—
I didn't recognize him at first—
threw open a steel door and became
my closest friend from high school
turning away in embarrassment. In a moment
we were in each other's arms, hugging, frozen,
but he wouldn't say a word
and already the cars were piling up behind us,
a row of impatience. He held the keys
to my mother's car and shifted his weight
back on his heels—half in anger, half in disappointment—
as I saw him do on the sidelines against Maine South,
a linebacker's helmet imprinted on my back.
For an instant, I can see us
putting our heads together in Jake's Diner
over the memory of kisses from Marcia and Mary-Anne,
or driving into Niles Township
for a beer-run in his father's pea-green Nova.
We were working side by side
in the old factory buried beneath Monroe Street,
taking orders from the foreman on the second floor
and stacking cartons on top of cartons
on top of heavy wooden skids. . . .
But he didn't want to remember the past
before our futures divided, before
whatever was going to happen between us
had already happened. The honking began
in earnest and the cars formed
a snake-like line curving up to the street,
like souls in purgatory.
I thought of his father's labor
on the corrugator and the printing press, the years
his mother worked the night shift at Billings Container.
But before I could ask about them,
my friend slammed the door and screeched away
in the glistening blue car of privilege.
In silence he left me
staring after him through the fog
and steam rising from the grated vents
at the buttresses and concrete dividers,
the spaces misting between us, the cars
rolling into the underground depths at nightfall,
filled with ghosts and strangers.

Edward Hirsch

ELEGY OF A MORNING WALK

Someone had put the world out, with the cat,
under a tree. The continents lay
immensely in shade. That day,
we could have stayed inside and heard
the walnuts dropping. We were where
the weedkiller field is posted for sale,
near a dirt path engraved in grass
that takes a boy on bike in the rain
in front of a train. That was when
it killed him, before the danger sign.
Now the sun was tiring out the moon,
and the miles were going by
inside the cars where they bumped across
the tracks. The red lights at the crossing
were black, and this time we made it,
like the time before. We were on foot when
the cat lifted a tentative paw
to what the world would do if touched
suddenly by something it never saw.

Marvin Bell

CIRCE IN LOVE

Glancing away from the party of boisterous
men flushed and furious with wine,
a platter of ribs steaming before them,
she halves a pear and smiles grimly
at her companions. Across the dancefloor,
a man is waiting for someone at a table for two.
He is middle-aged, with a red beard.
His clothes are foreign-cut and out of fashion.
Long voyages and bitter storms have lined his face.

On her island, with its lunar mountains,
it rains blue anemones at dawn.
The children eat black honey on black bread
and the old people are put to sea on hulks.
Amnesia is a national affliction.
No records are kept, no books printed.
In the schools they teach divination:
how to decipher the viscera
in which our destinies are scripted
and how to read the maps
the lost souls send back from Hell.

But tonight, while rain furrows the windows
like acid, and half the men and women
in the world know they could die for love
and the other half know they will die
for nothing, she assures herself
this traveler is waiting for her.
Tossing her hair back to catch
the lights, she crosses the room,
weaving through the dancers slowly.
And the band, knowing her song, plays it slowly.

Nicholas Christopher

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MADEMOISELLE'S LAST SUNDAY

Not the wages. How could I have faced
so long your own indifference and Madame's
—of hers I do not trust myself to speak—
for nothing more than money? No, Monsieur,

I had not remained within—you call it so?—
the Bosom of your Family to this day
were it not for Cameron. Your son requires
I shall not say *myself*, but someone there

to answer for a world you do not choose
to share. That is my cause—why I am here.
Surely he has said enough for you to know
as much? We learn not French together but

perhaps a little love, a little reason. So
when I fail—as I have failed today—
my only test for being here, I go . . .
Of course I have told him! Cameron at six

will understand my going better than
anyone in this house. Please to assume
as much responsibility as a child
—I do not ask for references even—

and listen to what occurred. Hear me out
—he's perfectly all right, he's in his room;
no harm has come to him: he was with me,
but I can no longer be accountable . . .

We were waiting for the métro, at Oberkampf,
after our visit to the Wax Museum
(Bluebeard, Landru, all the reprobates
were reproduced), and in the little crowd

along the platform was this . . . individual
—I know he was drunk, perhaps diseased as well—
who seemed to find us offensive: Cameron
and me! our clothes? our closeness? or perhaps

too many questions in a child's high voice?
No one seemed to mind that a *clochard* went on
screaming abuse at the two of us. It was
an ugly moment, I knew we must get away,

when across the tracks, on the Porte de Lilas *quai*,
a man of my own age, quite well-dressed,
opened his attaché-case and removed,
carefully closing the clasps, snap snap,

what I think was a machete—I know it was.
And then with great deliberation (while
the screaming continued: Cameron and I
still paralyzed) he climbed down to the rails,

stepping over each one to the other side,
our side, and up onto the platform where
quite calmly, with one sharp thrust to the neck
he killed—I knew it at once—our unknown foe

and walked—Monsieur, he walked away! No more
than when that lunatic was shouting filth,
now that he lay bleeding at our feet
was there a movement: no one in that crowd

moved, Monsieur! Cameron kept asking me
all the way home—we took a taxicab—
why that man was shouting at us, why
that other man had come across the tracks

to kill him with his . . . weapon as if he knew
the thing would be of use, as if . . . as if . . .
I had no answer then, I have none now,
Monsieur. I do not know. And I must leave

Cameron and my place—oh, not because
I cannot explain why such a thing occurred
—all of us are ignorant, Monsieur—
nor even because of the *joy* I had in that death

—why should I forsake the child for that:
desertion would be a self-indulgence, no?
It is not for my ignorance or my joy. It is
because of Cameron's elated questioning:

"Can we play métro as soon as we get home?"
and because I know what playing means, Monsieur,
and you do not. You *shall*! Nor do I care
that Cameron must live forever seeing it.

So must I. We all want truth on our side,
but to be on the side of truth—do we want that?
Cameron is in his room, playing. Alone.
I have said what is necessary to your son,

perhaps you will make my excuses to Madame.
I leave you with no notion what I shall do,
though certain I shall not seek another place.
No teaching. No telling. No knowing. *Au revoir*.

Richard Howard

EASTER WEEK, CUMBERLAND ISLAND

Let us say the eyes define
the wandering crescent moon
in line, that draws its toils,
tugging the tide and hugs
to shore an upturned dory
rooting like a horned dog
above a turtle's full moon
tractor tread and the seagull
trove of tossed-through
tidewrack sources: the piles
where armored whelk, scotch-
bonnet and turkey wing
are turned beneath the restless
barrow of the dunes, bleached
and sun-blinded along the brown
rocking of the Cumberland Sound
lee shore, where tonight
the hollow waves are combed
with candles, those watchfires
of phosphorus off the shoals
and bars light a road
almost anything might come down,
finding us by our smoke rise
in the dark, climbing the burned zone
of the sand on backward feet.

Richard Nalley

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MUSIC.

GENE SANTORO

Television
Mission of Burma
The dB's

The punk scene was, if it was anything, populist. Like the garage-band rock and roll from which it sprang in the mid-1970s, punk's focus was on democratic basics. In fact, if punk had a major legacy, it ran like this: Anybody can pick up a musical instrument and play it. Nihilistic and reductivist? Yes, deliberately. But it cleared out the bombast that had made "art rock" after the Beatles so convoluted and cerebral.

Television was the first punk-era band to move into the East Village club called CBGB when it was still booking the country, bluegrass and blues that named it. The quartet was your basic garage-band setup: Tom Verlaine and Richard Lloyd on guitars and vocals, Fred Smith on bass and vocals, Billy Ficca on drums. But what they concocted was an on-the-edge musical blend. Distilling the rage that was powering punkers like the Ramones (who were one of the bands to follow them into CBs) and the Sex Pistols, they voiced that anger in more sophisticated formats.

Television took a new tack on the basic ingredients of rock and jazz that had been percolating for twenty years. They drew on elements from Charles Mingus (music as workshop), John Coltrane (extended solos, fascination with Asian sounds), Ornette Coleman (the blues get funky and atonal) and the rockers who had added their own twists to these influences: the Yardbirds (mad-dog raveups and Arabic scales), the Byrds (chiming guitars and nasal harmonies) and The Grateful Dead (impressionistic free-form guitar jams).

That unique recipe yielded two albums; the first, *Marquee Moon* (1977), has recently been remastered and reissued on CD. Whatever this untrained quartet lacked in textbook learning they more than made up for by how well they listened, how oddly they mixed and matched, and how different their results were. The cutting irony of Verlaine's lyrics, for instance, is the perfect complement to the dual guitar work that slashes and burns, hovers and stings over the slamming, unavoidable beat. ("I fell right into the arms of Venus de Milo," he sings at one point over a guitar figure that could easily have been lifted from any classical composer's plagal cadenza.) Verlaine and Lloyd twine melodic, arching lines that successfully elude easy harmonic resolution, sidestepping the obviousness of The Allman Brothers, for instance, but never forgetting that this is rock and roll. Their solos, too, crackle and skid with fury even when they soar with lyricism: Verlaine often played with a switchblade, and Lloyd frequently attacked his guitar with a mike stand. Thanks to the judicious use of CD technology—something that still happens too rarely—every internal nuance of this musical swirl comes clear without being made pristine.

DISCOGRAPHY

Television: *Marquee Moon* (Elektra)
Mission of Burma: *Mission of Burma* (Rykodisc)
The dB's: *Like This* (Rhino/Bearsville)

Mission of Burma formed in Boston after Television had folded. By the time of their first LP in 1981, the scene had already tilted again, this time in favor of what the major labels began calling New Wave. Mostly a cross between disco's dance-floor beat and teeny-bop British synthesizer pop, New Wave quickly shoved aside what little punk and post-punk stuff had made it onto the radio. That development, combined with the emergence of MTV, which enshrined the major labels' made-for-TV Britishers (known as "haircut bands" because they were, like The Monkees, largely only corporate images), left the bands who'd worked at their music and their chops in garage-and-clubland out in the video cold.

Despite the fact that their two albums were released on a tiny U.S. label, Mission of Burma (Chris Conley on bass, vocals, percussion and guitar; Roger Miller on guitar, vocals, piano, trumpet and percussion; Peter Prescott on drums, vocals and percussion; and Martin Swope on tape manipulations, loops and percussion) managed to build a cult following and a unique sound whose echoes linger in bands like The Smiths and Sonic Youth. Playing with tape and electronic soundshapers and snarling, slamming guitars gives Mission of Burma a powerful musical force-field. Dadaist lyrics such as "This is not a photograph/And these are not real lives you feel" sit

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alongside more poignant and pointed ones like "Once I had my heroes/Once I had my dreams/But all of that is changed now. . . . That's when I reach for my revolver/That's when it all gets blown away." In other words, don't reach for the eighty-minute CD compilation called *Mission of Burma* if your idea of sophistication stops with Chopin.

Just about the time Mission of Burma was working Boston's collegiate club circuit, down North Carolina way the college crowd was finding its own local garage sounds and heroes. One of them was The dB's, the only band of these three that's still together (minus one of the original members). Songwriter Peter Holsapple and Chris Stamey on guitars and other stringed instruments and vocals, Jeff Beninato on bass and Will Rigby on drums followed one possible path of the broad swath cut by Television; they synthesized a peculiarly American blend of regional musics and psychedelic sounds from the 1960s with a postpunk scorched sensibility. Their off-the-wall idioms and coiled irony shaped not only the gnomic lyrics but the raunchy sounds themselves.

Take "White Train" as an example. The music parodies the traditional blues/country and western woo-woos as the lyrics twist the whole slave-originated tradition of inverting and subverting Christian hymns. Or there's the strutting exuberance of "A Spy in the House of Love," which matches some mutated soul-music riffs with Holsapple's typically weird take on relationships—this one an odd *ménage à trois* tale—with biting results. Or there's the Bo Diddleyesque stomp called "Amplifier," the story of a man who kills himself after his girlfriend splits with his stuff: "She'd taken everything/She'd taken everything/She took his cash/She took his checks/She took the soda pop/There was nothing left/She took the love letters out of his desk/. . . . She took his car/She took his bike/She took everything/She thought he liked/And what she couldn't take/She found a way to break/But she left his amplifier." Or there's "Spitting in the Wind," which opens with minor chords and twangy picking to set a musical question Mary Shelley might have written: "I can understand why you'd want a better man/But why do you want to make him out of me?"

So leave the Frankenstein of overcerebration behind. Grab these CDs, crank the volume and dance. ☐

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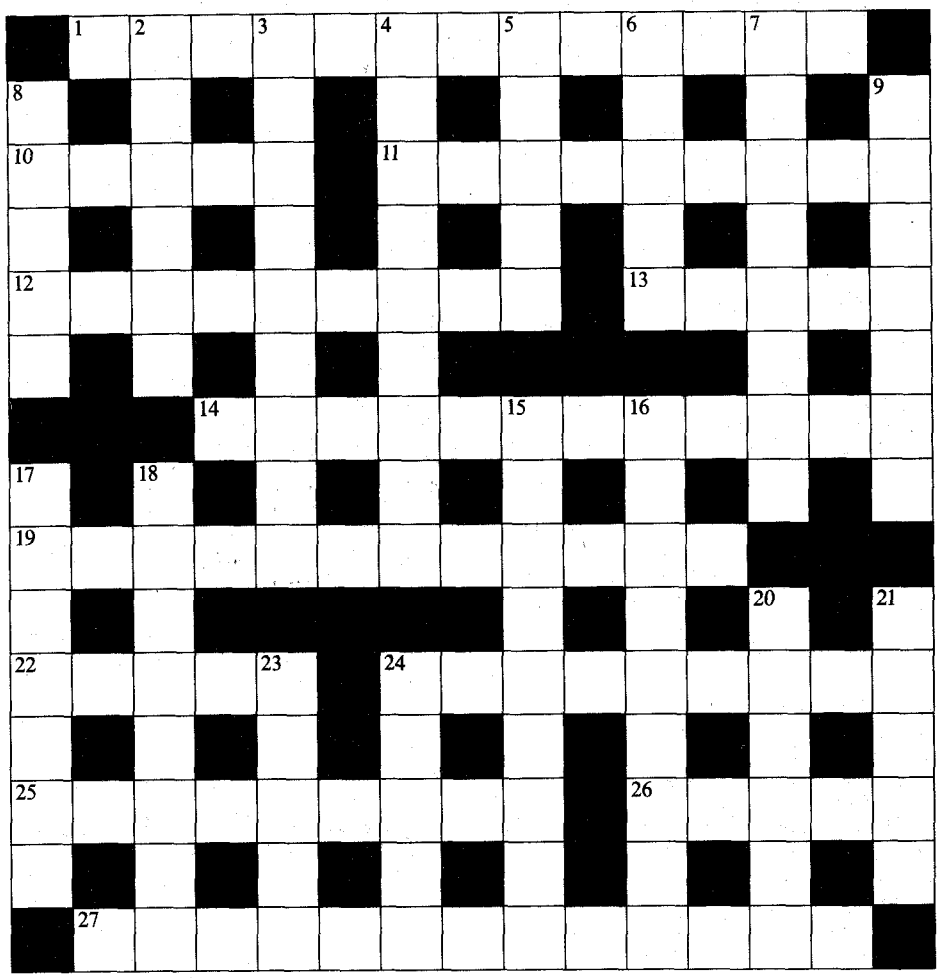
FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 Wine expert? One might check with him before sailing into things. (4,9)
10 A godfather's was difficult to refuse. (5)
11 Sometimes manned in times of strife, where one might drink—putting our time into the source of Japanese liquor. (9)
12 Nape, perhaps? (It might be fur you throw around.) (9)
13 An argument full of bigotry might be one. (5)
14 Does it man a death ship? (8,4)
19 A real poser, often barely noticeable. (7,5)
22 A Caledonian race, perhaps. (5)
24 A light little air has the manner of something that holds two parts of the house together. (9)
25 What might be compact around current abbreviation shows distinctive quality. (9)
26 Just a feature, nothing material. (5)
27 Wait for what the tile might do before one puts on slippers. (4,4,5)

DOWN

2 Evidently not skating where many work. (6)
3 One way to shape kepis—and very important ways. (9)
4 As an inside matter, their openings are not fortunate ones, supposedly. (9)
5 A runner at 22, possibly making shore. (5)
6 What it never does in the Sahara, at least in the Sahara in summer. (5)
7 Don't, for a change, mark how the pendulum goes. (2,3,3)
8 Be important as part of the peerage? (5)
9 Allow what might be under the duck to disappoint one greatly? (3,4)
15 Some might consider it a strong bid for noted beaters during the waltz. (3,6)
16 When confused, the citizen's missing it with the philosopher. (9)
17 The rest of what the scale is supposed to do is an old weapon, to a degree. (7)
18 The notes are cut short with it, but a Broadway success comes up with the kitty having nothing. (9)
20 Give it this, if you want to try something spinning. (1,5)
21 "The Poet" by one of our Presidents? (5)
23 What a way to fish! Such a drag! (5)
24 Continue at the plate, although the French put red on it in Louisiana. (5)

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